

Towards a Society based on Mutual Aid, Voluntary Cooperation & the Liberation of Desire

#43/Spring-Summer '97
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Anarchy

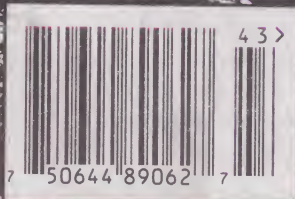
A Journal of Desire Armed

Raoul Vaneigem
The Space-Time of Lived Experience

John Zerzan
Running on Emptiness:
The Failure of Symbolic Thought

Bob Black
Murray Bookchin, Grumpy Old Man

Laure Akai
In Search of the Unabomber



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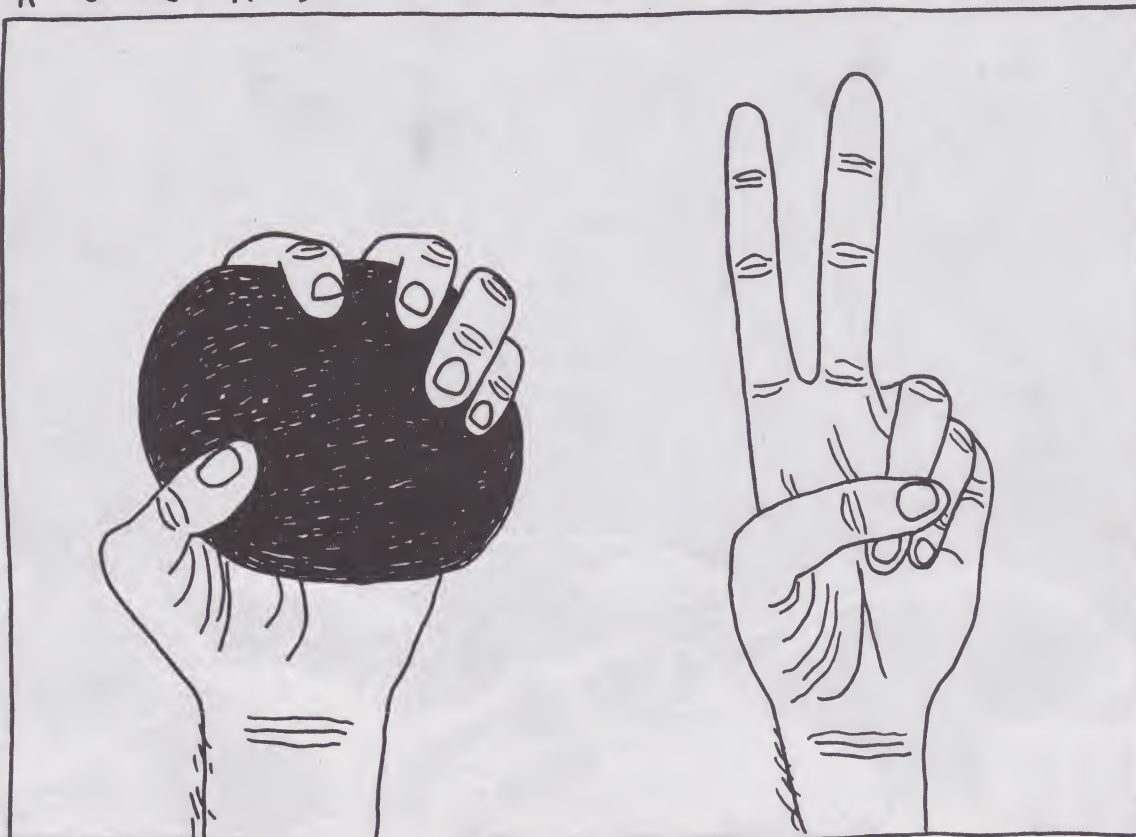
Please enclose an adequate self-addressed, stamped envelope with all articles, stories, photos, and graphic art if you wish to have them returned, or a 32¢ SASE if you want to receive a reply (or 2 IRCs for foreign addresses). All others become the property of CAL Press. All submissions should be typed & double-spaced. We prefer submissions on IBM compatible or Macintosh format 3.5" (DD or HD) diskettes.

Short news and comment articles or reviews which are used in "Openers," "The Sad Truth," "Alternative Media Review" or "International Anarchist News" may be edited for brevity and style. Other submissions (features, fiction) will be significantly edited only with the author's permission. Anarchy editors reserve the power to make editorial comments, to run introductions or responses, to classify articles, and to place sidebars wherever deemed appropriate. Until we can afford to remunerate authors, photographers, and graphic artists for their published contributions we will give free issues &/or subscriptions, or other appropriate tokens of our appreciation.

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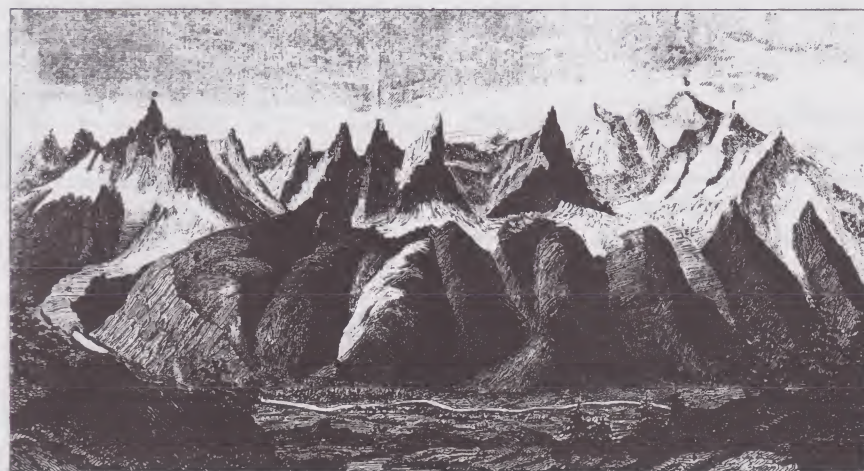
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R o c k s b e a t s c i s s o r s .



mr. fish

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"The whirligig of time has its revenges."
--B.A.G. Fuller

Inside Anarchy

Anarchy magazine is in a state of transition. Following two issues published by B.A.L. Press in New York, C.A.L. Press has taken responsibility for producing the magazine again, at least until new arrangements can be made for a more stable home. This issue has been put together at a rather rapid pace in an impromptu manner in order to get it out and into people's hands before the memory of previous issues fades away.

This issue is also published in a new, but temporary format. *Anarchy* should be back to its old format with the next issue, including a full-color cover, if there is sufficient support for the project forthcoming.

There will need to be a few major changes, however. At the present time there simply isn't anyone willing to take responsibility for keeping track of subscriptions, compiling mailing lists, and seeing to it that subscribers get their copies. Therefore, at least temporarily, no subscriptions are being offered. Those with subscriptions already accepted will still receive the issues they're due. But no further subscriptions will be entered.

Parallel with the change in publisher back to C.A.L. Press, is the gearing down of B.A.L. Press, whose P.O. Box will be closed, probably within the next year. For now, all orders, submissions and review copies of books and magazines should be sent to:

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Changes aside, this issue of *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed* continues the original editorial mission of the magazine: to provide an independent, critical and self-critical voice for anarchists and anti-state radicals around the world. *Anarchy* will remain neither left nor right, just uncompromisingly anti-authoritarian. *Anarchy* continues to refuse *all* ideology, and it remains critical of all religion and spiritualism, all morality and all political & economic hierarchy and domination. *Nothing is sacred*, least of all *anarchism*. We want to create a genuinely different alternative vision—radically cooperative and communitarian, ecological

and feminist, spontaneous and wild—a liberatory vision free from the constraints of our own self-domestication.

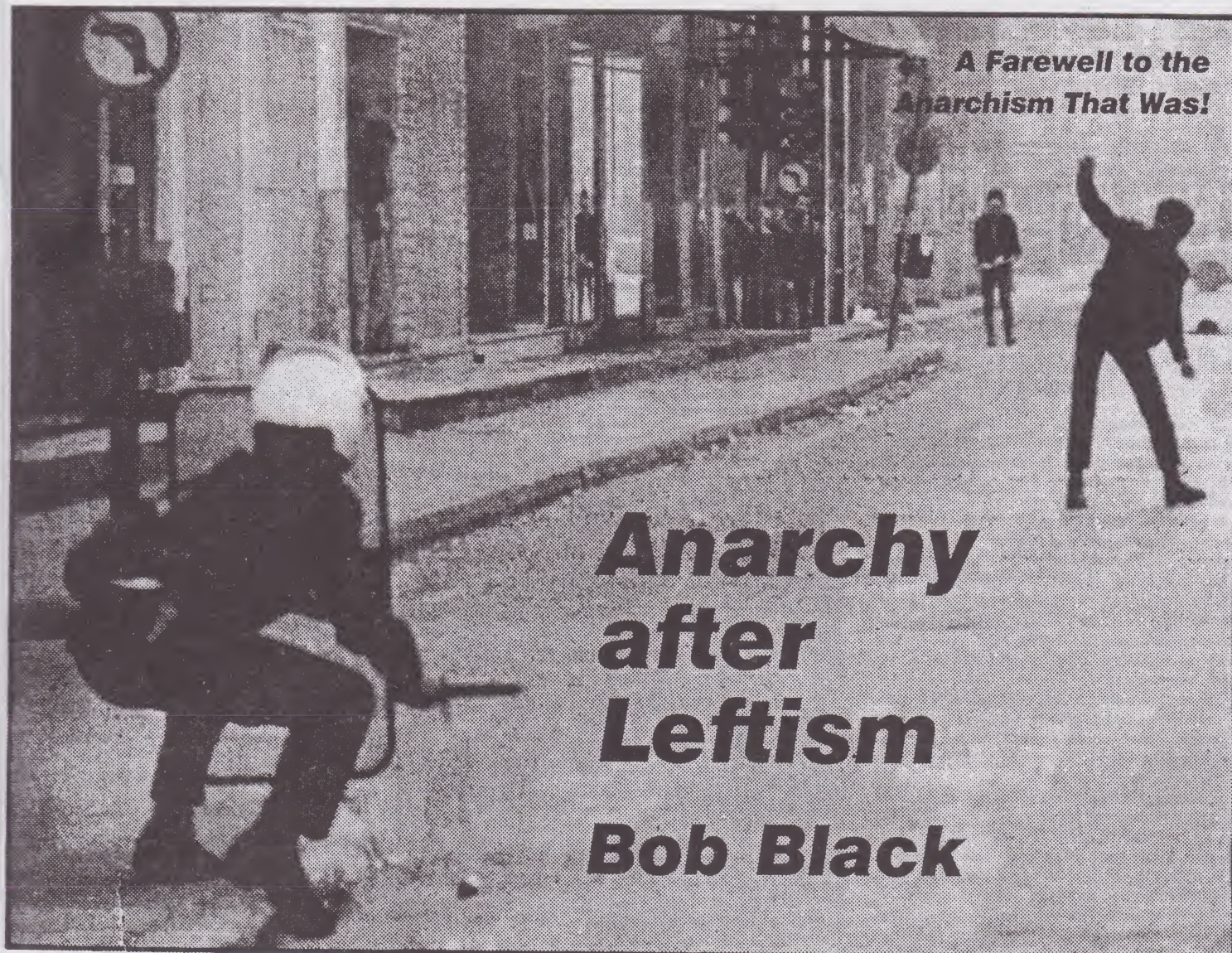
So what's in this issue? Many of the most prolific *Anarchy* contributors are back. With the publication in this issue of "The Space-Time of Lived Experience," we're nearing the end of the reprinting of Raoul Vaneigem's book, *Revolution of Everyday Life*. John Zerzan contributes another in his

series of "origins" essays, this time with a well-written critique of "Symbolic Culture." Bob Black weighs in with the first chapter of his entertaining new book *Anarchy after Leftism*, on (the limitations of) Murray Bookchin's contributions to the current anarchist milieu. Paul Simons contributes a related essay on Bookchin's poor understanding of dialectics. Laure Akai contributes an exploration of F.C., the Unabomber,

Continued on page 7



Mark Neville



"Cleansed of its leftist residues, anarchy—anarchism minus Marxism—will be free to get better at being what it is."

New from C.A.L. Press/Paleo Editions Book Publishing Project!

"Leaving the 20th Century, leftism of every stripe is in disarray and defeat—anarcho-leftism included. And Murray Bookchin's *Social Ecology* is certainly no exception to this trend." (*From the Preface*)

"In one respect, Murray Bookchin is right in almost the only way he's still capable of, i.e., for the wrong reasons. The anarchists are at a

turning point. For the first time in history, they are the only revolutionary current. To be sure, not all anarchists are revolutionaries, but it is no longer possible to be a revolutionary without being an anarchist, in fact if not in name." (*From the text*)

"Anarchy will not be vital until the last Leftist is hung with the guts of the last Social Ecologist." -P.Z. Simons

For a copy of this dynamite new book by Bob Black send \$7.95 plus \$2.05 postage & handling (for \$10.00) total by check or money order to C.A.L. Press, c/o AAA, POB 11331, Eugene, OR 97440.

The publication of *Anarchy after Leftism* by the Columbia Alternative Library signals the opening salvo of a new book publishing project. Watch for future titles.

Anti-Anarchist Repression in Quebec

Michael William

June 24, Quebec's national holiday, is usually an uneasy combination of healthy fun and not so healthy flag waving. Last year's celebrations in Quebec City, the seat of the provincial parliament, turned hotter than usual to say the least.

People had flowed into D'Youville Square following the traditional outdoor concert, joining others who were already there. (The square is the hangout of punks and countercultural types in the city). Cops tried to make arrests, provoking resistance from the crowd. Bricks and bottles began to fly. Rapidly a riot was taking place.

The cops brought in a water cannon and the riot squad. Though the former proved as effective as a garden hose, the cops were able to push the crowd out of the square. 2,000 people continued to riot, looting 80 shops.

At one point during the riot a crowd of hundreds gathered at the Parliament. People began to hurl paving stones and other objects at the buildings. 140 windows were done in, including all those on the ground floor of the main building. A statue on the grounds was upended, and people broke into one of the buildings, causing damage and setting a fire which was rapidly put out.

The next morning, Premier Bouchard presided over an award-giving ceremony at the Parliament while workers went about repairs. Theories flew fast and furiously: Who caused the riot and why?

Ordering an inquiry into the riot, Bouchard quickly opined that attacking the Parliament was an "accident"; an "irrational act" by "people who didn't know what they were doing."

Quebec City Police Director Bergeron then advanced his shock take: an extreme right-wing group—which he refused to name—was behind the riot. "People from this group led the riot," he affirmed.

Less plausible still was a theory in the tabloid *Photo Police*. In this version the purpose of the riot was... to boost the U.S. tourist industry! "These riots were planned and organized by the CIA at the request of powerful New England lobbies so that the East Coast of the US could profit from tarnishing Quebec's reputation."

Then a new voice made itself heard in the swirl of conspiracy theories. According to a local group called the World Anti-Fascist League (LAM), anarchists, and more specifically, the collective which edits the libertarian-communist journal *Démanarchie*, were behind the riot. The president of the LAM brandished a copy of *Démanarchie* (with a picture of a burning cop car) on TV, and pointed the finger at an editorial and articles which discuss two recent riots in Quebec. The LAM's 15 minutes of fame at *Démanarchie*'s expense included interviews on numerous TV and radio stations and quotes in most Montréal and Quebec City dailies.



Quebec City rioters attack the Parliament.

Rejecting "all claims of authorship and ownership" of the riot, *Démanarchie* said in a statement that "the riot belongs only to those who participated in it." Riots are "spontaneous," the statement repeated from a previous editorial. "The hunt for scapegoats is an attempt to disguise the authorities' responsibility for the ever-worsening social climate which is making more and more people feel like they have less and less to lose."

The LAM thesis was initially dismissed by police director Bergeron as "not serious." He was aware of *Démanarchie*, he said, but the group was too marginal to channel such an event. Soon, however, the focus of the police investigation began to shift. The offending *Démanarchie* cover again appeared on the front pages of the papers, brandished this time by the director of criminal investigation of the Quebec City police. The cops were still concen-

trating on the "professional agitator" thesis, he said, though now they were unsure which ones ("left, right, I'm not into politics, I'm a policeman").

Next, predictably, the raids started. First to be raided was Quebec City Food Not Bombs (Food Not Bombs shares a P.O. box with *Démanarchie* but the people visited are not in *Démanarchie*). Although the Food Not Bombs members were out of town during the riot, the cops discovered several pot plants, providing an excuse to arrest them. The political nature of their treatment was patent from the outset. Refusing to grant bail, the judge stated: "It would sicken me to liberate philosophers of anarchy."

The pot plants were part of a sinister plot he theorized, a "way of putting people to sleep to get them to swallow propaganda easier." The sentences handed down were also harsher than

the norm: one month in jail for the two people without a record and three months for a person with antecedents. Again linking them to the riot they hadn't participated in, the judge informed them that, for a year following their release, they were not to be present in the area of the Parliament or the walled historic section of Quebec City, where much of the looting took place.

A member of *Démanarchie* was then picked up while street selling the journal in Quebec City. The cops went on to raid his apartment where they confiscated a computer and samples of anarchist journals. Released without being charged, he was visited again twice by the cops, who asked him about his role in *Démanarchie* and whether he knew various people in the radical milieu.

Next the Montréal apartment of one of the founders of *Démanarchie* was raided. Again a computer and anarchist journals were seized and no charges were laid.

In Montréal, a coalition of anarchists, popular groups and leftist organizations called a press conference to denounce the arrest for street selling a radical journal, the witch-hunt against *Démanarchie* and the role of the LAM. A demo was also announced.

Interviewed by the paper *La Presse* about the press conference, Alain Dufour of the LAM bashed back, saying it was *his* organization which was being used as a scapegoat. Dufour did not neglect to play up a major asset in the eyes of the mainstream media: his group's non-radicalness ("the LAM isn't perfect, but we're not a subversive movement").

200 people turned up at the demo, which took place at Berri Square, a hangout for Montréal punks and marginals. In the last few months the square has been the object of a clean-up operation and cops have been harassing people and dishing out tickets. Among the 10 or so speakers were the two *Démanarchie* people who were raided and a representative of Food Not Bombs. As things were winding down, the cops arrested the anarchist who MC'ed the event, saying he had broken probation conditions which stipulated that he is not to attend demos. 60 people, mainly punks by this time, marched to the copshop, sitting in front of it and blocking off the street. After a tense two-hour standoff, the person arrested was released, to the heated applause of those present.¹

At this point the debate shifted to the "alternative" media, Montréal's three news/cultural weekly freebies, where numerous articles, editorials and letters appeared about the role of the LAM and the witch-hunt against *Démanarchie*. By now, its credibility on the line, the LAM began to sing a different tune—or rather a number of tunes. "I don't like *Démanarchie*. They make no sense and they have no credibility" said the president of the LAM out of one side of his mouth. "I don't want a war with *Démanarchie*" he spouted out of the other, saying he had a "lot of respect" for anarchists. Documenting and attempting to make sense of all the outrageous or contradictory statements by the LAM would be a major undertaking in itself.

As of this writing the dust has yet to settle.

- 10 of the 81 arrested in the riot remain in jail, some with 18 or 20-month sentences.
- On July 29 a speakout at D'Youville square in Quebec City was organized by *Démanarchie* and *Hé...Basta!*, a Quebec City anarchist zine, attracting about 100.
- On the same day an illegal demo took place at midnight in Berri Square in Montréal.

This Montréal demo was called by Food Not Bombs to protest the recent change of status of the site from a square to a park, meaning it is closed from midnight to six a.m. and much more stringent rules are enforced, including a ban on serving food (Food Not Bombs distributes cooked meals once a week in the square). 200 people occupied the square, sitting in small groups throughout the one-block area. After vegetarian food was served, many people gathered to listen to fiddle and banjo music. Later, song sheets were passed out, and anarchist songs were sung. People then shouted along with political punk music from a ghetto blaster and swirled in an improvised pit. At about 2:30 a.m. a bonfire was built.

The cops remained discreet, circling the park without stopping their cars. At 4 a.m., the remaining people were rushed by riot cops moving in from different sides. People were forced out of the square, but they regrouped and reoccupied it an hour and fifteen minutes later, after the cops had left. The riot cops returned, surrounded the protestors, and made 70 arrests, including many anarchists. People were released the next day and were hit with \$116.00 tickets for being in a public park when it was officially closed.

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¹ The person arrested at this demo was later rearrested on July 30th. After spending two nights in jail, he was brought before a judge and charged with breaking probation conditions by attending demos. The prosecutor argued that he should be kept in jail until September, when he is to be tried on charges stemming from an incident which occurred at a demo in April 1995.

The judge ruled that he would not have to remain in jail until the September court date, and he was let out. However, he is not to attend demos until his court date and risks being put in jail if he is caught at one. Further info about this case is available from the *Démanarchie* address.

Inside Anarchy

continued from page 4

through his/her writings in order to better understand who she or he or they are. And, finally, Max Anger takes on the dishonest practices of "The Spartacist School of Falsification" in the recent anti-anarchist articles appearing in *Workers' Vanguard*, organ of the Spartacist League.

And then there are the usual range of news, reviews, letters and discussion, although with only 64 pages for this issue, there will once again be many, many reviews and letters left over for the following issue. I'll be making a special effort to publish all outstanding reviews and letters in the upcoming issue, even if it means they will need to fill 50% of the space next time around!

I hope you enjoy everything inside the *Anarchy* in your hands. It's been fun putting it together after too long of an absence. See you again at the end of this Summer with issue #44!

-Jason McQuinn, Editor



Unfortunately, for the time being at least, *Anarchy* is no longer able to exchange with other periodicals until there are committed volunteers ready to handle subscriptions and mailings. However, we will continue to try to review periodicals received in future issues. All reviews in this column are by Alex Trotter, except those marked [S.E.] for Steven Englander or [D.M.] for Dave Mandl.

Publishers please note: To ensure that your publications are reviewed in future issues, send all zines and magazines to our new reviewer address: C.A.L. Press, POB 1446, Columbia, MO 65205-1446, USA.

Alternative Press Index Vol. 27, No. 3, July-Sept. 1995 (Alternative Press Center, Inc., P.O. Box 33109, Baltimore, MD 21218; email: altpress@lgc.apc.org) Index of articles from alternative and radical press sources, 148pp. Quarterly, with fourth issue being cumulative for the year. Annual sub rates: \$35 individual (within U.S.A.), high schools, and "movement groups"; \$175 for libraries and institutions.

April 17 Bulletin April 25-October 12, 1995 (P.O. Box 31417, Jerusalem, Israel) is a collection of letters, press releases and bulletins assembled by the Alternative Information Center providing information and support for Palestinian Political Prisoners. Includes updates on hunger strikes, abuses by the Israeli army, administrative detentions and more. Quite compelling. [S.E.]

Article 74 No. 14, Dec. 1995 (Alternative Information Center, P.O. Box 31417, Jerusalem, ISRAEL; email: alc@baraka.gn.apc.org) 8-page newsletter whose title refers to an addendum to the Geneva Conventions concerning reunion of families dispersed by armed conflict. The focus is on Palestinian refugees and continuing Israeli control of many aspects of life in areas now coming under administration of the Palestinian Authority. Subscription is US \$15.00 for 10 issues.

AWOL No. 2 (c/o CCCO, 655 Sutter #514, San Francisco, CA 94102) Newsletter, 16 pages, of "youth for peace and revolution," a group dedicated to helping young people avoid military service. Articles about women in the military, myth of the color-blind military, queers in the military, Q&A about draft registration, plus resource list. No price listed.

The Baffler No. Seven (P.O. Box 378293, Chicago, IL 60637) The latest issue of "The Journal that Blunts the Cutting Edge," with some smart critical writing on film and music in addition to the usual screeds on the cyber-elite, Newt Gingrich, Pat Buchanan, et al. Included in the former category are a blistering critique of the films of Quentin Tarantino by Fantagraphics

Alternative press review

Compiled by Alex Trotter, Steven Englander & Dave Mandl

publisher Gary Groth and a lament on the sorry state of contemporary film in general by Ray Carney, as well as a pair of articles on jazz clarinetist Artie Shaw and a Negativland exposé of the Dirty Secret of compact discs (80 cents to manufacture, \$16.98 list price, and artist royalties still based on the much lower list price of vinyl). Also included are articles on the time-management craze ("Taylorism redux") exemplified by the popularity of Franklin Planners and the pathetic coverage by the U.S. press of the wave of strikes in France last year, along with ruminations on the bloodless victory of "global cyber-capitalism" in the 1990s. All that, plus a critique of Greil Marcus's *Lipstick Traces* and a brief history of gay porn, as well as lots of fiction, poetry, and art. An absolute steal at five bucks. (\$5.) [D.M.]

Ben Is Dead No. 28 (P.O. Box 3166, Hollywood, CA 90028; e-mail: benisdead@earthlink.net) The gothic4 theme for this issue is "Bentime Stories," 116 pages chock-full of first-person accounts of dead-end jobs, odd sexual encounters, tales of suicide, disease, and misadventure, all served up more or less humorously. Single issue is \$3.50, three-issue sub \$15 (U.S.A.); single issue Canada is \$5.

Broken Pencil Vol. 1, #1 (P.O. Box 203, Stn. P, Toronto, Canada M5S 2S7) is a new publication of reviews for the variety of product from the Canadian alternative press: zines, comics, journals, newsletters, chapbooks, etc. Also includes interviews, articles and excerpts. Worth a look. \$4.95. [S.E.]

Caged In Vol. 2 (c/o OAAP, P.O. Box 285, Oberlin, OH 44074) Publication of a group called Oberlin Action Against Prisons, based in Ohio, which seeks to "create a forum for both prisoners and non-prisoners to develop strategies for

combating imprisonment and other forms of oppression." Many testimonies from prisoners, summary of Ohio prison conditions, administrative control units, poems, resource list. No price listed.

Communist Voice Vol. 2 No. 5, October 1996 (P.O. Box 13261, Harper Station, Detroit, MI 48213) Magazine espousing Marxism-Leninism and "antirevisionism," successor to similar publications which in the past were affiliated with the pro-Albanian Marxist-Leninist Party. Articles in this issue include topics such as the Persian Gulf war, the question of a Palestinian state, and marxism versus anarchism on overcoming the marketplace. \$3 for single copy; \$18 for six issues.

Cow Patties No. 4 (Pete H., 4190 Countryside Dr., Eagan, MN 55123) personal reflections from a high school girl (last time I thought the zinester was a boy...sorry!) Material here includes turning 16, getting braces, glorying in wide female hips, and worrying about osteoporosis. More about Grover, and Bert and Ernie from *Sesame Street*. It's free.

Dialogue Digest May 1995 (Dialogue, Box 71221, New Orleans, LA 70172) "Progressive community journal" of the Crescent City. Digest is only 4 small pages. Focus on pro-choice politics, clinic defense, Rock Against Racism, AIDS activism, etc. Annual sub is \$10 regular, \$5 low-income.

Factsheet 5 No. 58 (P.O. Box 170099, San Francisco, CA 94117) The biggest and oldest directory to the amateur small press world, 128pp., with hundreds of reviews grouped by category (e.g., sex, music, food, spirituality, queer, B-Movies). Sample issue is \$6; regular sub is \$20 for 6 issues, \$40 for same, first class.

Flipside No. 99, Dec. 1995/Jan. 1996 (P.O. Box 60790, Pasadena, CA 91116; flipside@ix.netcom.com) biggest, most comprehensive punk rock magazine. This issue, unpaginated, is about the usual 160 pages. Bands profiled include Anti-Flag, Celibate Rifles, Chixdiggit, Paper Tulpas, Red Aunts, and many more. Interviews with Russ Kick (of *Factsheet 5* and author of *Outposts*) and Paul Krassner, editor of *The Realist*. Other draws include a flexidisc and cartoons by John Crawford. \$12 for annual sub (6 issues); single issue is \$2.50.

Ghost in the Machine No. 1 (Kevin Martin, 4735 N. Maplewood, Chicago, IL 60625; email: KMZZZ@mcs.com) premier issue of a zine whose theme is the implosion of democracy, with swipes at ex-Senator Bob Packwood and advertising billboards. 4 pages. No price listed.

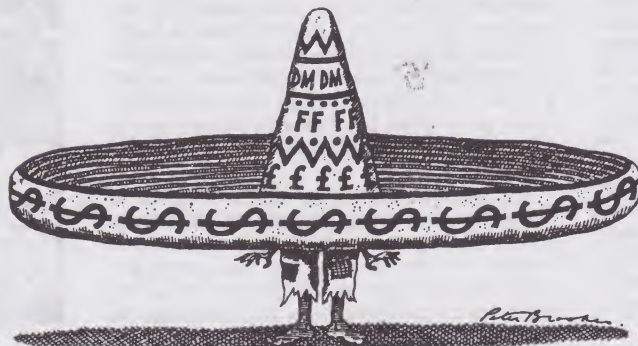
Icarus Was Right No. 3, Summer 1996 (P.O. Box 191175, San Diego, CA 92159; e-mail: icaruswas@pobox.com) Arty, 112-page magazine devoted mainly to punk rock; the animator of this project is a recent high school grad moving on to college. Articles include "Punk Rock and the Internet," "U.S. wartime censorship and the anti-culture," a defense of the Unabomber (and excerpts from the manifesto), plus lots of mini-reviews of not only bands and records but books, zines, and movies as well. Issue costs \$3 ppd.

Inside Front No. 8, January 1996 (Inland Empire Productions, 2695 Rangewood Drive, Atlanta, GA 30345) Newsprint magazine devoted to the hardcore scene. Interviews with the bands Gehenna and 25 ta Life; columns about anarchist organizations, surviving prison, releasing one's own records; letters; and reviews. Issue is \$2 in the U.S.A., \$4 everywhere else.

Interbang No. 4 (990 Thomas Dr., Ashland, OH 44805) 48-page newsprint magazine about punk rock, emphasis on the Ohio scene. The Mr. T Experience, The Twerps, Punk History 2: The Ramones. Plus record reviews. 25 cents per issue.

Libel No. 17 (Jenna Delorey, P.O. Box 1266, Venice, FL 34284) personal zine, 52 pages, put out by a young college woman in Florida, which recounts the events of the past year of her life: vacation, poems, feminism, anti-psychiatry, punk rock. \$1.00 or trade.

Liberation Vol. 3, No. 12, April 1996 (1014 Robson St., Box 73557, Vancouver, B.C. V6E 4L9 CANADA) Bimonthly journal of a leftist group that practices astrology, palmistry, and tarot card reading and is against capitalism. Crimes and shenanigans of various governments (U.S., Canadian, and Israeli) are interpreted as effects of the alignments of celestial bodies. Every article is prefaced with a biblical quotation. Rather strange.



Little Free Press Nos. 118 and 121 (301 S.E. 11th St., Lot 218, Little Falls, MN 56345) "food for thought since 1969" the late Ernest Mann gives an update on his life and offers reflections on how to free oneself from the profit system. Several book and zine reviews in these issues. Sadly, will not be published any longer.

Lollipop No. 20, October 1995 (P.O. Box 147, Boston, MA 02123; email: feedback@Lollipop.com) rock 'n' roll magazine, 46pp. Interviews, reviews of shows and records. This issue: David Bowie, Nine Inch Nails, Seaweed, Vandals, Mercury Rev, Earth 18, Anthrax, Smears. Plus comics, rants, essays. Sample ish is \$2, sub is \$15 for 10 issues.

Lone Star Socialist No. 14 Summer 1996 (P.O. Box 2640, Austin, TX 78768) 16-page bulletin of the small and struggling Socialist Party of Texas. Report from a state Baptist convention, Texas labor update, Nestle boycott, 1994 national elections, prison crisis in Texas. Trade or small donation.

Lumpen Vol. 4, No. 3 (2558 W. Armitage Ave., Chicago, IL 60647; email: lumpen@mcs.com) Furthering the dictatorship of the lumpenproletariat. Features include electronic space and the virtual public, cool spots in Illinois, summer jobs and summer love, stereo recording producer Esquivel, and against the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Free in Chicago; subscriptions \$10 for 4 issues.

Masquerade Erotic Newsletter Vol. 5 No. 5, Sept.-Oct. 1996 (Masquerade Books, 801 Second Ave., New York, NY 10017; e-mail: MasqBks@aol.com) Essays, reviews, and editorials relating to themes such as pornography, erotic art and writing, censorship. Emphasis on unorthodox and 'underground' sexuality (e.g., transgender, SM, fetishism). This issue: spanking, inside the sex industry, erotic writer Marco Vassl. 32 pages, profusely illustrated with black-and-white photos. \$5/single copy, \$30/six issues.

Meshuggah Nos. 12 and 13 (Fehl Press, 200 East 10th St. #603, New York, NY 10003) 56-page quarterly magazine featuring, as the subtitles of these issues have it, "Ideas and Stories for a Depraved Age" and "Humor Treats and Thought Droppings." Collected reprints of wacky and subversive writings. Way off the beaten track. Lots of cartoons as well. \$2 for an issue, \$7 for four. Back issues available.

NAMBLA Bulletin Vol. 16 No. 3 (P.O. Box 174, Midtown Stn., New York NY 10018) 48-page quarterly magazine, illustrated, of the North American Man/Boy Love Association. News about conferences, court cases, arrests in Amsterdam. Cost of issue: \$3.95.

News From Nowhere No. 4, Spring 1996 (P.O. Box 460593, San Francisco,

CA 94146) 16-page, semi-annual journal "dedicated to uniting art & culture with political struggle" from leftist and feminist perspectives. This issue: the importance of Bertolt Brecht for political theater today, street theater, a critique of the *New Yorker* magazine as mouthpiece of the smug liberal elite. Plus poems, photos, illustrations. Subs are \$15 for four issues.

News from Within Vol. XI No. 12 December 1995 (P.O. Box 31417 Jerusalem, ISRAEL; email: alc@baraka.org) As Noam Chomsky, for one, has often pointed out, the discourse on the politics of the Middle East is far more open in Israel than here in the U.S., where there is a de facto taboo on criticism of our Zionist ally in the mainstream media. Published in Jerusalem by a staff made up of both Israelis and Arabs, NFW is an intelligent and well-researched magazine covering developments in the Israeli-Palestinian struggle from a refreshingly critical and non-hysterical perspective. In this issue: articles on the Rabin assassination (and the semiotics of the media's response to it), the origins of Israeli militarism, internal debates over Palestinian elections, and ongoing activities of the Israeli peace movement, all but unknown here. (No price listed.) [D.M.]

Newspeak KataZine Vol. 2, No. 1 (5 Steeple St., Providence, RI 02903) mail-order catalog of the Newspeak bookstore, 56pp. Articles on H.P. Lovecraft's racism, interviews with Debbie Goad of *Answer Me!* and Tiny Tim, free energy, and lots of stuff about UFOs. \$3 U.S., \$4 Canada.

The New York Hangover Vol. 2 No. 6, August 1996 (P.O. Box 20005, West Village Stn., 527 Hudson St., New York, NY 10014; e-mail: hangover@bigmagic.com) 16-page tabloid devoted to beery existentialism, slackerism, the desperate search for love, and fond

reminiscence of love affairs. Free (in New York, at least).

Nitassinan News Vol. 1, No. 3, June 1995 (Friends of Nitassinan, P.O. Box 804, Burlington, VT 05402; email: act@web.apc.org) newsletter of international support group for the Innu people of Newfoundland in their struggle to resist the encroachment of industrial civilization. 6pp., no price listed.

Oculus Vol. 5, No. 3 (P.O. Box 148, Hoboken, NJ 07030; email: info@oculus.com) Bimonthly magazine about indie/alternative music. Lots of capsule reviews, features about Kate Jacobs, The Wedding Present, and an article about film. Sample issue free, subs are \$5/one year (five issues).

On Indian Land Summer 1995 (P.O. Box 2104, Seattle, WA 98111) Quarterly tabloid, 16pp., published by Support for Native Sovereignty, a group of non-Natives who support land, fishing, and religious rights of Native peoples, and Native activists imprisoned by the U.S. and Canadian governments. Subscription is \$10 for 4 issues.

Open Eye #3 (BM Open Eye, London WC1N 3XX, ENGLAND) is an antidote to the usual propaganda, news, and editorializing in the mainstream media. Thorough and broad in scope, this ish has Noam Chomsky on the free market myth and Tim Lang on the erosion of democracy by GATT. Also: non-lethal warfare, heretical science, and Judi Bari and the FBI. A must for news and media junkies. \$12/3 issues. [S.E.]

Open Secrets Vol. 1, #5 Nov. 1995 (PO Box 772, Washington DC, 20044) is the publication of the Coalition on Political Assassinations. Devoted to Kennedy assassination conspiracy theorizing. Very serious. For those really interested. 28 dense pages. \$35/yr. [S.E.]

Paranola Vol.3, #2 Summer 1995 (PO Box 3570, Cranston, RI 02910) is a non-partisan and entertaining conspiracy reader. This issue looks into the Oklahoma City bombing, the gas attack in Tokyo, Dan Rather and JFK, eco-authoritarianism and the New World Order, and more. \$12/4 issues. [S.E.]

Paving Moratorium & Auto-Free Times #7 Summer 1995 (PO Box 4347, Arcata, CA 95518) is the newsletter of the Alliance for a Paving Moratorium, an organization devoted to the destruction of car culture and the primacy of the automobile, and supports bikes, pedestrians, and rail transport. Examines the social, political, economic and environmental effects of America's greatest fetish. \$30 membership includes newsletter. [S.E.]

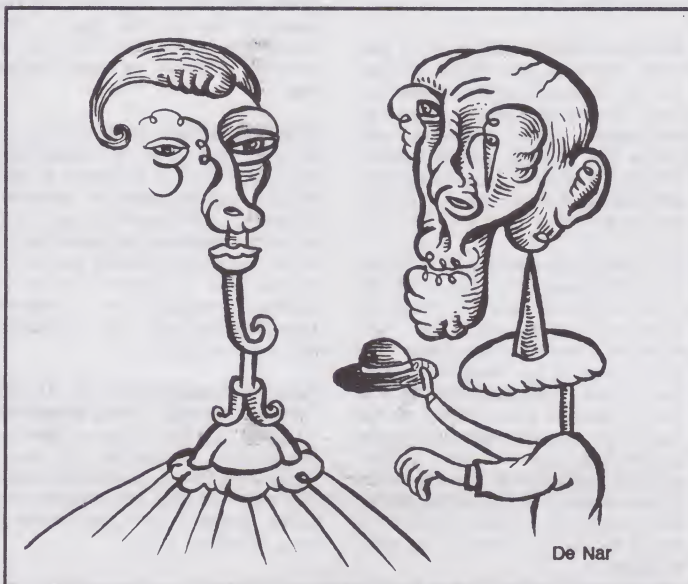
Project Z #1.4 (PO Box 31848, Seattle, WA 98103-1848) is Luke McGuff's interesting and engaging personal zine. He riffs on language and work in a piece on the Microsoft campus, explores male hunger (lust), and recounts the eruption of the marvelous at a Summer Solstice parade. He also graciously shares attention with readers who've sent him letters. 10 pages, xerox. \$1.00 or trade or letter of comment. [S.E.]

Race Traitor No. 5, Winter 1996 (P.O. Box 603, Cambridge, MA 02140) journal of those who wish to "abolish the white race," although they seem to be working very hard to preserve racial consciousness. This issue contains an odd exchange of letters between a Jewish leftist and a neonazi who come to a polite understanding. Other articles include "Black-Jewish Conflict in the Labor Context..." Single issue: \$6 ppd.; sub: \$20 for 4 issues.

Reclaiming Newsletter No. 60, Autumn 1995 (P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114) The eponymous publication of "a collective of San Francisco Bay area women and men working to unify spirit and politics." Heavy emphasis on magic and paganism, with announcements of upcoming events and ritual performances, calls for organized political action by pagans, and informational articles aimed at practicing members of the Craft. Also includes a schedule of local classes and events. (\$6-26/year, sliding scale.) [D.M.]

Revolt in Style October 1996 (4150 Mission Blvd., suite 210, San Diego, CA 92109) Leftish hipster city paper of San Diego, 70 pages, featuring alterna-rock, movie reviews, articles on 'space-age pop' music, bashing the Starbucks coffeshop empire, plenty of advertisements. Listed as free, but probably not outside San Diego.

Ricknews September 1995 (Richard S. Holliander, P.O. Box 810051, Boca Raton, FL 33481) Pop culture silliness, mostly about TV shows, accompanied incongruously by a Mickey Z piece about the horror of the Anglo-American incendiary bombing of Dresden during



A Blast from the Past

Review by John Zerzan

Public Secrets: Collected Skirmishes of Ken Knabb; 1970-1997 by Ken Knabb (Bureau of Public Secrets, POB 1044, Berkeley, CA 94701, 1997). 408pp. \$15.00 paper.

One of the most striking things about this hefty volume, Ken Knabb's *magnum opus*, is how firmly it is stuck in the past. Intelligent and articulate, Knabb is, above all, a card-carrying Situationist. And time has evidently stood still for him since the Situationist International disbanded in 1972. The ten-page index to *Public Secrets* contains close to 800 names and subjects; I didn't find even one entry that could not have been written in the '70s, mainly the early '70s at that. Knabb's collected flyers and pamphlets, which constitute half the book, were in fact mostly written during that decade.

The rest of *Secrets* is largely a temperate, jargon-free outline for a political revolution that would usher in universal self-management based on the model of classic workers' councils. In an argument reminiscent of Murray Bookchin's *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* (1971), Knabb holds that we now have the "material development" necessary for an egalitarian, ecology-enhancing revolution. He overlooks the fact that the course of this technological development has been the material embodiment of inequality and the destruction of nature, inseparable from social and political domination and

Public Secrets is largely a temperate, jargon-free outline for a political revolution that would usher in universal self-management based on the model of classic workers' councils.

division.

In common with other prescriptions for self-management, Knabb's puts the emphasis on democratic process while overlooking what it is that's being managed. It really adds up to self-managed alienation, because it is worker control of essentially the same basic system we now endure, minus, it is hoped, excesses like war, famine, and Kathy Lee Gifford.

The social landscape Knabb outlines would employ "credits" instead of money, but otherwise it wouldn't be qualitatively different from what exists now, including specialized expertise and computerized "coordination of global production."

If one compares *Public Secrets* with Bookchin's 1995 rant, *Social Anarchism vs. Lifestyle Anarchism*, the two seem glaringly different. Employing a calm, carefully modest, non-argumentative approach to his councilism, Knabb avoids any substantial discussion of

critical thought in the 25 years since the S.I. signed off. In contrast to this self-proclaimed "mild-mannered enemy of the State," Bookchin rages and orates, naming names and delivering detailed denunciations of the degeneracies he sees afflicting the anti-authoritarian milieu. Beneath the stylistic surface, however, the two are as one, holding up a leftist lamp of the past to light the way to their vision (sic) of the future.

Neither really analyzes the present—its magnitude of psychic immiseration, the incredible poverty of an all-pervasive postmodern culture, the reasons why leftism is all but extinct, the truly pathological imperative of contemporary techno-capital. Nor do they even acknowledge the foundational elements of our present nightmarish situation, including division of labor, symbolic culture, domestication, Progress, and industrialism, among others. Knabb's book, like Bookchin's, has something of the swan song about it, an ode to a limited and dying contestation in direst need of superseding itself.

Public Secrets is clear and reasonable-sounding, pitched in an effective, self-effacing mode. But I find it disappointing that manifest reason and sensitivity are not open to the urgent needs of current reality. As things worsen demonstrably and dramatically, what seems more to the point than a quiet, not ineloquent, recipe from the ideological past, is a deepening of our understanding of how much further we need to go than we thought in the 1970s.

Alternative press review

Continued from previous page

World War II. Designed with page-layout software, has color illustrations. Year's sub (12 issues) is \$10.

Satya Vol. 3, No. 6, Dec. 1996 (P.O. Box 138, New York, NY 10012; e-mail: stealth@interport.com) "A magazine of vegetarianism, environmentalism, and animal advocacy," 28 pages. Theme for this issue is the kinship between humans and the great apes. Letters, book reviews, recipes. Subs are \$10/year.

The Sinner's Bible (Sticky Green, P.O. Box 27663, Los Angeles, CA 90027) catalog, about 80pp. Sex, drugs, aliens, pirate radio, magic, and sundry other things to titillate you. \$3.00.

Soundings Summer 1996 (Twin Oaks Community, 138-S2 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23117) "Newsletter of the Federation of Egalitarian Communities," eight pages. Updates on events in five

associated intentional communities, three in Virginia, two in Missouri. Includes calendar of community events for 1996. \$40 membership fee buys community newsletters, one-year sub to *Communities Magazine*, and *Communities Directory*

Stubble Musicline No. 12 (P.O. Box 1420, Attleboro, MA 02703) another rock 'n' roll magazine from Massachusetts. Dozens of capsule reviews in alphabetical order, interviews with bands Butt Trumpet, Dirt Merchants, Dink, and Wayne Kramer, plus cartoons and photos. Annual sub is \$7; one issue is \$2.

Synthesis/Regeneration No. 9, Winter 1996 (WD Press, P.O. Box 24115, St. Louis, MO 63130) Quarterly "magazine of green social thought," 50pp., published for members of the Green Party USA. Focus of this issue is "Nuclear Hot Spots": mobilizations against French nuclear bomb testing in the Pacific and nuclear waste dumping in the United States. Advocates a European-style proportional representation system of parliamentary democracy so as to pursue an electoral strategy like that of the German Greens. One issue is \$3.95.

The Tainted Clam No. 2 (3048 S. 126th Plz. 140, Omaha, NE 68144) 16-page zine with a bent for animal liberation and conspiracy theories. This issue: evils of vivisection, scamming on telephone companies, the non-lethal police state, and a suggestion that Ted Kaczynski is the fall guy in the Unabomber case. Send a trade or donation for a copy. Its Free to prisoners.

Third World Resources Vol. 11, #4 Oct-Dec. 1995 (464 19th Street, Oakland, CA 94612) is published to alert activists and educators to resources related to Third World issues. They maintain a data-base on organizations, books, pamphlets, journals, audio-visual materials, CD Roms. This ish includes a special guide for resources on Latin America and the Caribbean. \$35/4 issues. [S.E.]

Towards Freedom Vol. 44, #7 Jan. 1996 (209 College Street, Burlington, VT 05401) is a liberal journal offering a progressive perspective on world events. This issue is devoted to democracy and the media. It's International in scope, academic and professional in tone. \$22.50/yr. [S.E.]

Turning the Tide Vol. 8, No. 4, Winter 1995-96 (PART, P.O. Box 1990, Burbank, CA 91507) 54-page journal of People Against Racist Terror, an organization with black nationalist affinities and an apparent Maoist tinge. Articles cover such subjects as anti-Asian cop violence, the coming of black genocide, solidarity with the Zapatistas, Zionist terror, and the U.S.A. as a settler state. \$3.95 on newsstands; \$15 annual sub.

World War III Illustrated #22 (PO Box 2027, Tomkins Sq. Station, New York, NY 10009) is a magazine of political comix and art. This issue is devoted to America's love affair with deception: Kevin Pyle takes on the Tuskegee syphilis study, Sabrina Jones wonders about Carl Andre's supremacy, and Mumia Abu Jamal about freedom. Much, much more. 95pp. \$4.00. [S.E.]

Widdershins No. 3 (135 Allegro Dr., Santa Cruz, CA 95060; e-mail: heme@cruzio.com) "A volatile journal of magick, ancient and modern" covering neopagan, occult & Jungian themes, 52pp. includes the blood cross ritual, sigils, servitors, and godforms, Eshus the Yoruba Trickster, and apothecary of strong medicine. Quite interesting with nice graphics. \$5/copy, annual sub/\$23.



What's Wrong with this Picture?

Review by Bob Black

The End of Work: The Decline of the Global Labor Force and the Dawn of the Post-market Era by Jeremy Rifkin (G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, NY, 1995)

Futurists have announced the new post-industrial epoch almost as often as Marxists used to announce the final crisis of capitalism. Admitting as much, Jeremy Rifkin insists that this time, the future is finally here, and here to stay. He may be right.

No original thinker, Rifkin is a lucid concatenator and popularizer of important information, served up for easy digestion. Almost anybody would come away from reading this book knowing more about trends in technology and the organization of work which have already transformed everyday life worldwide and, whatever their ultimate impact, are certain to effect profounder changes still. Along the way, though, Rifkin makes enough crucial mistakes for his reform schemes, prosaic though they are, to assure their consignment to the utopian scrapheap.

Although Rifkin provides plenty of details, they never detract from the big, basic message. The world as we have known it throughout historic time has been a world of work. For all but an elite few (and even for most of them), their work has (as Rifkin says) "structured" their lives. For all the revolutionary transformations since the dawn of civilization, work as quotidian fatality has (to lift a line from William Faulkner) not only endured, it has prevailed. Indeed, work was longer, harder, and duller after the Industrial Revolution and after the Neolithic Revolution

before it. Political revolutions have worked profound changes, but not profound changes in work.

That's all beginning to change, according to Rifkin. The global economy has never been more productive, but worldwide, unemployment is at its highest since the Great Depression. New technology, especially information technology, is always capital-intensive. It's blind faith and sheer fantasy to suppose that new technology always replaces the jobs it destroys. All the evidence, as Rifkin relentlessly and rightly insists, is to the contrary. It's nonsensical and cruel to retrain ten workers for a job only one of them might get (but probably won't, since a young new entry into the workforce is probably healthier, more tractable, and unburdened by memories of the good old days). We're moving toward a "near-workerless world." Out of 124 million American jobs, 90 million "are potentially vulnerable to replacement by machines."

As Rifkin reveals, the tech-driven downsizing of the workforce spares no sector of the economy. In the United States, originally a country of farmers, only 2.7 percent of the population works in agriculture, and here—and everywhere—"the end of outdoor agriculture" is foreseeable. The industrial sector was next. And now the tertiary sector, which had grown relative to the others, which is now by far the largest sector, is getting pared down. Automatic teller machines replace bank tellers. Middle management is dramatically diminished: the bosses relay their orders to the production workers directly, by computer, and monitor their compliance by computer too.

We approach what Bill Gates calls "friction-

less capitalism": direct transactions between producers and consumers. Capitalism will eliminate the mercantile middlemen who created it. In Proletarian Heaven, the handloom weavers must be snickering.

What's wrong with this picture? Fundamentally this: the commodities so abundantly produced in an almost workerless economy have to be sold, but in order to be sold, they must be bought, and in order for them to be bought, consumers require the money to pay for them. They get most of that money as wages for working. Even Rifkin, who goes to great lengths not to sound radical, grudgingly admits that a certain Karl Marx came up with this notion of a crisis of capitalist overproduction relative to purchasing power.

There are other difficulties too. The work of the remaining workers, the knowledge-workers, is immensely stressful. Like text on a computer screen, it scrolls around inexorably, but for every worker who can't take it, there's another in "the new reserve army" of the unemployed (another borrowing from you-know-who) desperate to take her place. And the redundant majority is not just an insufficient market, it's a reservoir of despair. Not only are people going to be poor, they're going to know that they're useless. What happened to the first victims of automation—southern blacks displaced by agricultural technology ending up as a permanent underclass—will happen to many millions of whites too. We know the consequences: crime, drugs, family breakdown, social decay. Controlling or, more realistically, containing them will be costly and difficult.

If that is the futurist future, seemingly so

menacing even to those who are forcing us forward, what's wrong with this picture? Employers should be clamoring for the reform which underpins all the others Rifkin proposes: a shorter workweek. That would put more people on the payroll, giving them something to do besides feeling sorry for themselves or, worse yet, figuring out who's to blame, and providing the purchasing power to buy the commodities the employers are in business to sell. But—to Rifkin's apparent amazement—those Americans still enjoying the dubious privilege of working, work longer hours than they did in 1948, although productivity has since then more than doubled. Instead of reducing hours, employers are reducing their full-time workforces, intensifying exploitation and insecurity, while simultaneously maximizing the use of throwaway temp workers, momentarily mobilized reservists.

Rifkin is obviously frustrated by the bosses' failure to appreciate what he has ascertained to be their long-term, enlightened self-interest. His own modest proposal for a kinder, gentler high-tech capitalism accepts as given that a lot of people will continue to work while a lot of others will not. For those who work he proposes shorter hours, but he frets that they may fritter away their free time. Still more worrisome are those whom the economy has downloaded into idleness. For both classes he has a solution. The still-employed are to enter "the third sector," the volunteer sector (as opposed to the market and government sectors), encouraged by "a tax deduction for every hour given to legally certified tax-exempt organizations." And the permanently unemployed will get a government-supplied "social wage," channeled through "nonprofit organizations to help them recruit and train the poor for jobs in their organizations."

Hold it right there! Hasn't Rifkin repeatedly insisted that the early decades of the 21st century, if not sooner, will be a nearly workerless future? That productivity will increase as producers dwindle? Why does this imperative govern the for-profit sector but not the nonprofit sector? If there's still so much work to be done, be it ever so feel-good and "community-based," and if people are to be paid to do it—whatever the "creative accounting" by which their wages are paid—then this is no nearly-workerless world at all. Rifkin is assigning the otherwise unemployable to the workhouse or the chain-gang. That's, to say the least, an awfully odd conclusion to a book titled *The End of Work*. What's wrong (something obviously is) with this picture?

Just this. Rifkin misunderstands, or recoils from, the implications of his very powerful demonstration that work is increasingly irrelevant to production. Why is work getting ratcheted up for those who still do it even as it's denied to those who need to work to survive? Are the bosses crazy? Not necessarily. They may understand, if only intuitively, their interests better than a freelance demi-intellectual like Rifkin does. That supposition is at least consistent with the observed facts that the bosses are still running the world whereas Jeremy Rifkin is only writing books about it.

Rifkin assumes that work is only about economics, but it was always more important than that: it was politics too. As its economic importance wanes, work's control function comes to the fore. Work, like the state, is an institution for the control of the many by the few. It preempts most of our waking hours. It's often physically or mentally enervating. For most people it involves protracted daily direct submission to authority on a scale otherwise unknown to adults who are not incarcerated.

Work, like the state, is an institution for the control of the many by the few. It preempts most of our waking hours. It's often physically or mentally enervating. For most people it involves protracted daily direct submission to authority on a scale otherwise unknown to adults who are not incarcerated.

Work wrings the energy out of workers, leaving just enough for commuting and consuming. This implies that democracy—if by this is meant some sort of informed participation by a substantial part of the population in its own governance—is illusory. Politics is just one more, and more than usually unsavory manifestation of the division of labor (as the work-system is referred to after its taring-up by academic cosmetologists). Politics is work for politicians, therapy for activists, and a spectator sport for everybody else.

If we hypothesize that work is essentially about social control and only incidentally about production, the boss behavior which Rifkin finds so perversely stubborn makes perfect sense on its own twisted terms. Part of the population is overworked. Another part is ejected from the workforce. What do they have in common? Two things—mutual hostility and abject dependence. The first perpetuates the second, and each is disempowering.

Rifkin wonders how the system can deal with vast numbers of newly superfluous people. As he's himself disclosed, it's had plenty of practice. The creation and management of an underclass is already a done deal. The brave new world of techno-driven abundance—if by abundance you mean only more commodification—begins to look like this:

1. **THE ALPHAS.** A relatively small number of tenders of high-tech, allied with essential tenders of people (entertainers, politicians, clergy, military officers, journalists, police chiefs, etc.). They will continue to work—harder, in many cases, than anybody—to keep the system, and each other, working.

2. **THE BETAS.** In lieu of the old-time middle class and middle management which, as Rifkin explains, are obsolete, there will be a social control class of police, security guards, social "workers," schoolteachers, day-care workers, clinical psychologists, with-it parents, etc. It merits special attention that the more robust and aggressive members of what used to be

the working class will be coopted to police those they left behind (as one Gilded Age robber baron put it, "I can hire one-half the working class to kill the other half"). Thus the underclass loses its leaders even as it's distracted by the phantasm of upward mobility.

3. **THE GAMMAS.** The vast majority of the population, what Nicola Tesla called "meat-machines," what Lee Kuan Yew calls "digits," what Jeremy Rifkin is too embarrassed to call anything. They cannot be controlled, as the

other classes can, by work, because they don't work. They will be managed by bread and circuses. The bread consists of modest transfer payments maintaining the useless poor at subsistence levels as helpless wards of the state. The circuses will be provided by the awesome techno-spectacles of what, in the wake of the Gulf War, can only be called the military-entertainment complex. Hollywood and the Pentagon will always be there for each other.

Gammas form a mass, not a class, a simple aggregation of homologous multitudes, as Marx characterized the peasantry, "just as potatoes in a bag form a bag of potatoes." They enjoy certain inalienable rights—to change channels, to check their email, to vote—and a few others of no practical consequence. Wars, professional sports, elections, and advertising campaigns afford them the opportunity to identify with like-minded spectators. It doesn't matter how they divide themselves up as long as they do. As they really are all the same, any differentiation they seize upon is arbitrary, but any differentiation will do. They choose up teams by race, gender, hobby, generation, diet, religion, every which way but loose. In conditions of collective subservience, these distinctions have exactly, and only, the significance of a boys' tree-house with a "No Girls" sign posted outside. Gammas are essentially fans, and self-activity of fans is exhausted in their formation of fan-clubs. They are potatoes who bag themselves.

4. **THE DELTAS.** This setup will engender its own contradictions—class societies always do. Bill Gates to the contrary notwithstanding, frictionless capitalism is an oxymoron. Every class will contribute a portion of drop-outs, deviants, and dissidents. Some will rebel from principle, some from pathology, some from both. And their rebellion will be functional as long as it doesn't get out of hand. The Deltas, the recalcitrants and unassimilables, will furnish work for the Betas and tabloid-type entertain-

ment for the Gammas. In an ever more boring, predictable world, crazies and criminals will provide the zest, the risk, the mystery which the consciousness industry is increasingly inadequate to simulate. VR, morphing, computer graphics—all very impressive, for a while, but there's nothing like a whiff of fear, the scent of real blood, like the spectacles nobody did better than the Romans and the Aztecs. The show they call "America's Most Wanted"—that's a double entendre. Societies don't necessarily get, as some say, the criminals they deserve, but nowadays they get the criminals they want.

"Whether a utopian or dystopian future awaits us depends," concludes Rifkin, "to a great measure on how the productivity gains of the Information Age are distributed." None of his evidence substantiates this *ipse dixit*, announced so early on that by the time the reader has made it to the policy proposals, he probably assumes that the proof must have been lurking amid all those facts lobbed at him along the way. In fact, Rifkin's credibility in predicting the future is strained by his poor performance predicting the past.

Rifkin asserts, almost as an aside, that the American experience of the last 40 or 50 years—higher productivity and longer hours of work—is an aberration without historical precedent. (And thus, presumably, a wrinkle easily ironed out by our statesmen once it's drawn to their attention by Jeremy Rifkin, tribune of the people.) Both the Neolithic (agricultural) and the Industrial Revolutions spurred productivity and also lengthened the hours of work (as well as degrading work qualitatively, as an experience). Productivity gains never ushered in utopia before, why should they now? More equitable distribution of the wealth never ushered in utopia before, why should it now? It's not that Jeremy Rifkin knows something he isn't telling us. Rather, he doesn't know something he *is* telling us.

Rifkin's utopia turns out to be the New Deal. The state-certified, state-subsidized third sector is just the WPA: public-works projects. Shortening the workweek by a mere ten hours amounts to no more than bringing New Deal wages-and-hours legislation up to date, just as the minimum wage has to be raised from time to time to adjust for inflation. It's far from obvious that these reforms would do much if anything to reverse the trickle-up redistribution of wealth which took place in the '80s. It was World War II, after all, not New Deal social legislation, which effectuated this country's most recent—and quite modest—economic leveling. What Rifkin calls the "social wage" smacks of what Republicans call "workfare." And using tax breaks to encourage socially responsible enterprise is about as utopian as allowing charitable deductions, but probably not as radical as reducing the capital-gains tax.

Rifkin, like all futurists, is incapable of proph-

esying a plausible future. A futurist is by definition a forecaster of the continuation of present trends, but if the present isn't utopian, why should the future-as-the-same-only-more be utopian? Not to say it can't possibly be, just to say that Rifkin has some explaining to do. He hasn't taken seriously or even acknowledged the possibility that a *real* end of work is a practical utopian possibility, not just an eye-catching title for a pop-futurist book. But that would involve rethinking work in a radically



different way.

Thomas Edison said (but probably knew better) that genius is 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration. Utopia is 1 percent perspiration and 99 percent inspiration. Its practical possibility was never determined by technology or productivity, although technology and productivity have something to do with it, for better or for worse. Huxley and Orwell in tandem, with the advantage of not knowing nearly as much as Bill Gates and Jeremy Rifkin, long ago saw further than they do. Tech was the dependent, not the independent variable—the consequence, not the cause.

There's one and only one profoundly important conclusion of Rifkin's and the irony is, he doesn't really mean it. It's his implicit equation of utopia with the end of work. But Rifkin has no idea what the end of work would mean because he's given no thought to what work means. Otherwise he could hardly have thought work is ended by being performed in a different "sector" of the economy. That's like saying that exploitation is ended once everybody's employer is a workers' state.

To speak of the "end" of work is to speak in the passive voice—as if work is ending itself, and needs only a nudge from progressive policies to wind down without a fuss. But work is not a natural process like combustion or entropy which runs its course or itself. Work is a social practice reproduced by repeated, multitudinous personal choices. Not *free* choices usually—"your money or your life" is, after all, a choice—but nonetheless acts of human

intention. It is (the interaction of many) acts of will which perpetuate work, and it is (the interaction of many) acts of will which will *abolish* it by a collective adventure speaking in the active voice. Work will end, if it does, because workers end it by choosing to do something else—by living in a different way.

What, after all, is work? Nuances aside (as insightful as exploring them can be), work is production forced by and for survival. Its objectionable aspect isn't production, it's forced labor to live. Production without coercion is not only possible, it's omnipresent. Rifkin points out that half the adult population already does volunteer "work" (a misnomer) with no economic encouragement at all. That's not a bad place to start to think about how to reconcile production and freedom.

As Rifkin complains, people who volunteer *money* to charities can take tax deductions, but people who volunteer their services cannot. But why are they donating their services? To oversimplify, two main motives are probably operative. The first is benevolence. Many people derive satisfaction from helping other people. The second is satisfaction in the activity itself: the scoutmaster who enjoys the company of kids, the food-kitchen cook who enjoys cooking, or anybody with a craft or skill he cherishes so much he wants to pass it on to others. And these motives often overlap and reinforce each other. Often you can't help people better than by imparting your skills to them. Most people have more ability than money, and sharing their abilities, unlike sharing their money, doesn't deprive them of anything. They gain satisfaction and they lose nothing. Might there be a clue here to *really* ending work?

Rifkin only discerns, and only vaguely, that the voluntarist spirit has a part to play in the end of work. He doesn't notice that self-interested activity does too—that *play* has a part to play. Mary Poppins perhaps exaggerated in saying that "in everything that must be done, there is an element of fun," but in many things that must be done, there could be elements of fun. Production and play aren't necessarily the same, but they're not necessarily different either. Income and altruism aren't the only springs of action. Crafts, sports, feasts, sex, games, song, and conversation gratify by the sheer doing of them. Rifkin's no radical, but he's certainly a leftist, with the Judeo-Calvinist presumption that if you enjoy doing something, especially with others, it must be immoral or frivolous.

We finally know what's wrong with this picture: we've seen it before, and we know how it ends. The future according to the visionary Rifkin is the present with better special effects. Putting people out of work does nothing to put an end to work. Unemployment makes work more, not less, important. More makework does

Lenin: The "Evil Genius"

Review by Alex Trotter

Lenin: A New Biography by Dmitri Volkogonov (The Free Press, New York, NY, 1994) 529 pp. hardcover.

Written by a colonel-general in the Russian/Soviet army who was himself an ex-Communist, *Lenin: A New Biography* uses previously unknown material from the Soviet archives unearthed only recently since the Communist Party lost supreme power in Russia. Previous biographies of Lenin had been written either by official Soviet sources, Westerners, or exiles. General Volkogonov, now deceased, was in recent years manager of the archives under Boris Yeltsin, so we can take it that his version of history is the one that is, for the moment, officially favored in the former Soviet Union. Volkogonov has also written biographies of Stalin and Trotsky.

Lenin leans on the already familiar comparison of Lenin with Robespierre as a high priest of revolutionary terror. Plenty of evidence is marshalled to demonstrate Lenin's machiavelian ruthlessness and callousness, his cynical antipathy to liberty as a value in itself: personal orders to shoot, not just reactionary class enemies, but wavering Red Army soldiers; orders to confiscate grain from peasants on pain of death; arrogant statements of contempt for intellectual freedom. Volkogonov grants that Lenin had humanitarian principles in theory and was an idealist on some level: "Because his delusions reflected to some extent universal values of social justice, he succeeded in converting them into a program for millions of people, and imposing it by force." Fair enough.

The general makes clear that he has come to abhor Leninism, but he doesn't go so far as to repudiate Marxism, at least not in so many words. A convert to the virtues of parliamentary democracy (he is fond of quoting and paraphrasing Winston Churchill), Volkogonov feels that the Constituent Assembly, the Mensheviks, and the Provisional Government, if given a fair

chance, could have brought the light of Western-style democracy to Russia; Martov and Kerensky are both compared favorably to Lenin. Well, don't count on it. Thousands died in the summer offensive of 1917 ordered by Kerensky. Volkogonov claims, or hopes, that a moderate Social Democracy upholding liberal values would have produced a humane outcome in Russia. But Bolshevism cannot be so cleanly separated from the Social Democracy that spawned it. Mensheviks and Bolsheviks alike sought to bring capitalist modernization and industrialization to Russia; they just quibbled over the timing and manner in which it was to be done. The Social Democrats in Germany, when confronted by revolutionary upsurges of the working class following World War I, swiftly dropped the mask of liberality and presided over the butchery of the insurgents by the reactionaries. And to hold on to power and continue the war, the government of "moderate socialists" in Russia had to become increasingly repressive and quickly lost all popular support.

Volkogonov says he is a good Russian patriot, and one of his gripes about the Bolsheviks is that they were not Russian patriots, by his lights (though they certainly kept alive the tradition of Great Russian dominance within the new Soviet Union). He thinks they were nogoodniks for trying to "export revolution." He can't forgive Lenin for his defeatist position in World War I. He recounts at some length the extensive support the Bolsheviks received from the German army high command. But he has no analysis of how beholden the bourgeois socialists of the Provisional government were to the interests of the Entente powers, particularly France.

Even the czar gets a break; Volkogonov feels that Nicholas II was maybe not such a terrible guy after all; he might have accepted reforms entailing a kind of constitutional monarchy. In other words, maybe all that radical extremism was unnecessary. Much attention has been paid recently to the execution of the Russian royal family and what a beastly act that was; this book adds its voice to the chorus. When the general is not commiserating with aristocrats and bourgeois, he points out that the laboring classes in whose name the Bolsheviks ruled with an iron fist were suffering from famine, surveillance by the Cheka, and repression from the Red Army. But he has relatively little to say about the reactionary White generals who struggled to seize power in the civil war following the revolution. The Bolsheviks are rightly condemned for ruling with brutal violence, but they were by no means alone responsible for the violence that engulfed Russia.

The agrarian question was the heart of the matter. Marx himself had championed the cause of the Populists and the *obshchina*, the peasant commune in Russia, and repudiated his own followers, the Marxists, who looked forward to capital's industrial development of

Russia as a prerequisite to socialism. Bolshevik campaigns such as War Communism and Stalin's nationalization of agriculture aimed at breaking the independence of the peasants to ensure the survival of the state. Volkogonov touches on the agrarian problem obliquely in his description of the left Socialist Revolutionaries, who briefly shared power with the Bolsheviks but advocated a policy favoring Russia's vast peasant majority. The general himself makes a show of sympathy for the traditional peasant commune, but he doesn't pursue the implications of this question that was so important to the Populists and the S.R.'s. Perhaps this is because it would entangle him in some messy contradictions; he is really much more a "westernizer" than a "slavophile." The *obshchina*, like all noncapitalist social and economic entities, was an obstacle to the relentless expansion of the capitalist mode of production and had to be liquidated. The fact that this destruction was carried out by a Red state-capitalism escapes Volkogonov's understanding.

The anarchists are mentioned once or twice. So is the revolt of the Kronstadt naval garrison, but in no great depth at all. The Makhnovshchina, one of the most important movements of the Revolution, receives no attention whatsoever. The reader learns only that in Ukraine, "armies of bewildering political loyalties swept back and forth..." I suspect the reason for such a slipshod presentation is that the revolution weighed on Volkogonov's brain like a nightmare, and he would rather be rid of it. For him, if there had to be a revolution, better it be controlled by sensible bourgeois politicians, and not fanatical intellectual ideologues. In the general's version of history, the "unknown revolution" from below remains unknown. The real tragedy of the Russian revolutions of 1917 was not that the Bolsheviks ruined the noble efforts of nice, humane, democratic socialists, but rather that the peasants and workers didn't toss off all the political parties.

The energy driving *Lenin: A New Biography* is that of a reformed sinner. Volkogonov's Lenin bio is a great upchuck of the "Leninism" he was force-fed all his life. Vladimir Ilyich was once revered as a demi-god; now he has to be blamed as the bad daddy and evil genius who spoiled everything. Even some creatures of the system that he spawned are given mild treatment, such as Khrushchev and Gorbachev, for their roles in "boring from within" to undermine the foundations of Soviet bureaucracy and ideological tyranny. Gorbys, whom Volkogonov supported at one time, is shown to be just another bureaucratic party animal, but then is praised for his "admirable statesmanship."

Volkogonov is actually a pretty intelligent, competent historian and writer, and his book is not devoid of interest. It has more Leniniana than you can shake a knout at: Lenin's ethnic and class origins and the official Soviet reticence to discuss them; his ménage-à-trois with

What's Wrong with this Picture?

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not mean less work, just less work it is possible to perform with even a vestige of self-respect. Nothing Rifkin forecasts, not even rising crime, offers any promise of ever ending work. Nothing Rifkin proposes does either. So strongly does he believe in the work-ethic that he schemes to perpetuate it even after the demise of the toil it hallows. He believes in ghosts, notably the ghost in the machine. But a specter is haunting Rifkin: the specter of the *abolition* of work by the collective creativity of workers themselves.

Arab Comic Strips

Review by Alex Trotter

Arab Comic Strips: Politics of an Emerging Mass Culture by Allen Douglas & Fedwa Malti-Douglas (Indiana University Press, 1994) 263pp. \$20.00 paper.

This book will appeal to people who love comics, and those with an abiding interest in the culture of the contemporary Arab world. *Arab Comic Strips* is laden with postmodernist academic jargon and is overly concerned with questions of "postcolonial identity," but on the whole it's readable and often engaging. Anyone not already conversant with this little-known topic is sure to learn something. It is also generously illustrated with examples of the comic strips under discussion, some reproduced in color.

The authors both teach at Indiana University:

Lenin: The "Evil Genius"

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Krupskaya and Inessa Armand; Fanya (Dora) Kaplan's attempt to assassinate him; excruciating details of his debilitating fatal illness and the machinations within the bureaucracy culminating in Stalin's accession to power; and the maximum leader's relationships with his principal comrades in the Politburo, such as Sverdlov, Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin *et al.* But you could probably find better things to spend your hard-gained money on. More informative accounts of the crimes and impostures of the Bolsheviks were written long before in such works of classical anarchism as Emma Goldman's *My Disillusionment in Russia*, Maximoff's *The Guillotine at Work*, Arshinov's *History of the Makhnovist Movement*, and Voline's *The Unknown Revolution*. The anarchists, some of whom had initially supported the Bolsheviks, produced, without assistance from secret Soviet archives, much more compelling exposés than one penned by an army general who only in the last years of his life relinquished Marxist-Leninist ideology and was shocked, shocked, to discover that the framework within which Stalin the totalitarian dictator, as well as lesser tyrants such as Brezhnev and Andropov, could operate was created by Lenin and other founders of the USSR.

As an aside, another book worth checking out for inquiry into the nature of the Soviet Russian experience, and written at a higher level of intellectual achievement, is *Oriental Despotism* by Karl August Wittfogel (another ex-Communist). The merit of this work lies in its exploration of insights as well as inadequacies in the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky to show how the peculiar circumstances of Russia (and other colonial or semicolonial countries such as India and China) challenged Marxist schemas of necessary historical progression in modes of production as the prerequisite for a communist society.

Douglas is an associate professor of history and semiotics, Malti-Douglas a professor of Arabic, women's studies, and semiotics. They start out with the slogan "All comics are political," citing Ariel Dorfman and Frantz Fanon on comics as carriers of cultural imperialism and alienation, which sets the generally leftist (lefto-liberal) political tone of the book. Main areas of focus are children's comic strips, representations of women, and the degree to which various social and ideological forces—Western consumerism, Islam, and secular Arab nationalism—impose their influence. There is an introduction giving general information about the history of comic strips in Arab countries, their similarities to and differences from American and European comics, and circumstances of their production and distribution. Each chapter deals with a different country or region—Egypt, Syria, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria, and French Arabs (mostly of Algerian origin).

In the ubiquitous modern mass media Western images penetrate the traditional regional culture and undergo mutations. Thus, for example, an Egyptian Mickey Mouse is seen observing Ramadan. (Here Western influence means Euro-American; Japanese comics have had little impact.) The Arabic-speaking world constitutes a cultural unity (read, ethnically homogeneous) to a greater extent than the anglophone or francophone commonwealths, and, the authors say, comics are the most pan-Arab element of mass media. The pop culture of the cities is a mixture of residual rural folklore and the new mass culture that floods in from the West. As with Chinese, the various spoken dialects of Arabic are often mutually unintelligible, so the written literary language (*fushá*) dominates in comic strips.

References to non-Arab Muslim societies are unusual in Arab strips, which often appeal to an original Arabian identity rather than a medieval Dār al-Islām. Although respect for Islam as the moral basis of society is generally a consensus value, politics is usually stressed more than religion. The political line taken tends to be secular nationalist and is almost invariably anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist.

A salient difference between Arab comics and those of the West concerns sex: Arab strips have nothing in them of the pornography frequently seen in European adult strips (such as those of Guido Crepax) and American underground comix. Depiction of the consumption of alcohol is likewise absent. Some infringement of these taboos can be found in the productions of the *beurs* (Arabs born in France) assimilated to a greater or lesser extent into French society.

Comics in the United States have always been enjoyed by a plebeian, and mostly young, audience. In Europe there is also an audience in what the authors call the "adult intellectual elite." In Arab countries the creators of comic strips are nearly all members of the intellectual class. Many of them have other métiers outside

the comic-strip industry as writers, painters, journalists, and so on. There is a constant battle between the official propaganda of the state and the cultural values of this intellectual class, except in countries like Iraq and Syria where the party-state allows no room for dissent (however, the authors claim that not even Saddam Husayn is able to exercise truly total control over popular culture under his power).

One chapter discusses the life of Gamal Abdal Nasser (president of Egypt 1956-1970) presented in comic strips. The central events treated are Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal and subsequent war in 1956 and Egypt's humiliation in the Six-Day War with Israel of 1967. The authors get wrapped up in semiotic analysis, talking of narrative chains, syntagms, and morphemes. They inform us that "Nasser is a world historical figure..." and served the Egyptian people as "the crystallization of their identity." They bring up the idea that Nasserism is a form of fascism—and dismiss it without explanation, referring the reader, in an endnote, to another book. Whether or not "fascism" is an appropriately precise description (Nasser in fact supported Hitler as a move against British imperialism and maintained connections with the flotsam and jetsam of Nazi Germany after World War II; see, for example, *Nasser's Egypt* by Walter Laqueur) is not all that important; it is enough to recognize Nasserism as the noxious bureaucratic ideology that it was, and about this the authors are wimpy and evasive.

In "Machismo and Arabism" we are shown an example of the hagiography of Iraqi dictator Saddam Husayn in comic strips. The story examined is a roman à clef in which the hero is understood to be Saddam, though under a different name. The young Saddam joins the clandestine struggle of the Baath Party against a ruthless dictator. But the party itself takes a back seat to Saddam, portrayed as a lone hero. The main interest here lies in virtues attributed to Saddam originating in a pre-Islamic set of values associated with the Jāhiliyya—the "golden age" of Arab culture and source of the Arabic language and poetic traditions. Part of this set of values is *Muruwwa* (manliness), the code of the desert bedouins, which embraces courage, loyalty, and hospitality. Saddam does not cry out in pain when wounded. On the lam from the state, he enjoys the hospitality of the bedouins, which serves as his rite of passage and conveys upon him a pan-Arab identity, making him, for propaganda purposes, truly a man of the people.

A different version of Baathism prevails in Syria, a country which blocks the importation of comic strips from other Arab states (and most other countries as well, with the exception of the former Soviet Union). Much of Syrian comic-strip output has the style and sensibility of Socialist Realism, with President Hâfiz al-Asad as father figure presiding over happy children in scarves and pioneer uniforms of the ruling party. The nationalist theme is very strong. The

people, men and (unveiled) women alike armed, march under the Syrian flag, having triumphed over the evil French colonialist oppressors. In Syrian comics, Islam is conspicuously absent; the government pushes science rather than religion. But not all comics in Syria are blatant propaganda. Some are drawn from classical traditions and feature misers, wise fools, and travelers (e.g., Ibn Battûta). There are also animal stories, fairy tales, and comics for children. One such cited is "The City of Hamzas," which, somewhat in the manner of "Schoolhouse Rock," teaches children the correct use of hamzas in the orthography of the Arabic language.

From the Mashriq (Middle East) we turn to the Mahgrib (North Africa), which is virtually bilingual in Arabic and French, and where Berbers constitute a significant minority of the population. In Tunisia, some comics have drawn on the tradition of, and historical struggle over, al-Andalus, or Moorish Spain. One example features the story of Jamîla, a heroine of Islam who dies a martyr (burned, like Joan of Arc, at the stake) fighting the jihad against the victorious forces of the Spanish and French Reconquista. The authors also mention a similar story in comic-strip form about a Berber queen who led resistance against the Arabs and was defeated.

In Algeria, the Arab country where France left its deepest impress, most comic strips are in French, making them all but unknown elsewhere in the Arab world. In Algerian comics, anti-imperialism is a familiar theme. The CIA, Zionists, and the French (including even comic-strip characters such as Asterix and Obelix) are standard villains, and the heroes are chic and

modern (e.g., an Arab James Bond-type secret agent).

In the 1980s a movement of comics arose among the growing population of *beurs*, or second-generation Arabs (mostly Algerian) born in France. These comics are entirely in French, as few of their readers are literate in Arabic, and feature references to sins unacceptable in an Arab country—masturbation, alcohol, gambling, pork. The themes involve the adventures of young people torn between two cultures, and not entirely accepted into either one. French racism, particularly in the form of Le Pen's National Front, is a frequent butt of ridicule.

Islamic comic strips for children and youth, often government-sponsored, are common in the Arab world. Many involve moral tales about pious youth, hadiths (sayings and customs of Muhammad), and Qur'anic recitations. Intifada themes in recent years have featured the motif of Allah's divine providence interceding to rescue the heroes from Israeli soldiers. Historical comic strips concern tales of the jihad accompanying the initial rapid spread of Islam out of the Arabian peninsula, the subsequent high points of Arab civilization—the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates—and the Crusades (in which the Crusaders appear as the heavies).

The taboo on representation of the Prophet is not always strictly observed. One interesting image from an Egyptian cartoon biography of the Prophet shows the infant Mohammad in swaddling held in the arms of Hafîma, a wet nurse, looking much like a Western depiction of the Virgin. Also worthy of note, because of the traditionally marginal role given to representation in Islamic tradition, is the existence of the Qur'an in comic strips, a Tunisian production in

French and Arabic, which has been condemned by Islamic authorities. Sacred figures like prophets (an example cited is Abraham) appear as burst bubbles, shafts of light, or something similarly amorphous and abstract. The authors contend that comic-strip versions of the *Bible* do not present similar problems because of the long-standing iconographic tradition of the West.

In conclusion, there is an assessment of current trends in the Arab world and speculation about how they will affect comic strips and culture in general. The secular (socialist-nationalist) ideology that accompanied and often inspired early Arab comic strips is waning and being directly and violently challenged by Islamic fundamentalist movements. The authors pose the question, Will the Islamic revival doom the comics? They think not, because they believe the weight of Western cultural dominance in the world will prevail. They point to Iran, where the regime has relied on iconography in its own propaganda and has tried to Islamicize rather than ban such cultural forms as the novel and the cinema.

But it is easy to imagine, once the novelty of Arab comic strips has begun to wear off, that, rather than simply supporting modernity and multiculturalism against religious reaction, as the authors of this book seem to, radicals in Arab countries could appropriate and subvert comics, film, and other effusions of modern global spectacular pop culture in a situationistic manner, as has been done in the West.

This presentation of comics from various Arab countries holds plenty of interest, and whets the appetite for more. I for one would have liked to see a chapter on Libya.

Manichean Anarchism or Dishonest Anarchism: Judging a Bookchin by his Cover-ups

Review by Lawrence Jarach

Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Chasm by Murray Bookchin. AK Press, 22 Lutton Place, Edinburgh, EH8 9PE, Scotland; or POB 40682, San Francisco, CA 94140-0682, 1995) 87pp. £5.95/\$7.95 paper.

The scenario put forward by Professor Murray Bookchin as an "unbridgeable chasm" seems to further that very gap. The [former] Dean has written a rather nasty polemic. Most polemics are written out of a sense of indignation at a corrupt racket obfuscating its own real agenda; but it seems that the professor has written this particular diatribe because his grasp on anarcho-celebrity is slipping, because his intellectual and written hegemony over authoritarian leftist anarchism is threatened.

Dean Bookchin uses deliberately provocative language, and it's clear from the context that the inflammatory words refer to phenomena of which he disapproves; sub-marxist jargon like "lumpen" and "petty bourgeois" are thrown around the pages without him ever providing a

characteristic, let alone a definition. They are used as condemnatory dismissals rather than descriptive terms. They clarify nothing. The assumption that his readers will automatically understand and agree with his discourse, coupled with the in-your-face language is the way we can tell the piece is a rant.

I want to make it clear that I am not using the word *rant* as a negative dismissal; I use the term to describe a passionate—and therefore hopefully not boring—offering of ideas. It's not the same thing as a long-winded philosophical tome that uses painstakingly logical examination and analysis to prove a point. A rant is deliberately provocative and noisy.

The Dean's myopia is shown by his construction of polarities without the possibility of anything existing between or beyond: mysticism/superstition vs. rationality; progress vs. primitivism; and that awful individualism vs. "serious organizations, radical politics, a committed social movement, theoretical coherence, and programmatic relevance." Plainly he's not the first person to pontificate on the tensions between these tendencies, but it's also clear

that he is among the most shrill. Reading this piece was like reading an updated and expanded version of another deceitful anti-individualist screed, Chaz Bufe's *Listen, Anarchist!* (One of the reasons I co-wrote *Turning A Deaf Ear* in response to this latter was because Bufe had refused to name any of his opponents. Professor Bookchin, on the other hand, burns his opponents' pseudonyms—a truly reprehensible thing to do: it's both an invasion of privacy and has the potential of exposing those people to danger.)

What the Dean calls "lifestyle anarchism" (i.e., all the anarchic tendencies he disapproves of) can be seen—in addition to the reasons he propounds—as an instinctive reaction against the more authoritarian aspects of anarchist practice, such as the idealization of and deference toward experts and published writers. This reaction can also partly explain why anarchism remains a marginalized section of the "social change movement." To most non-anarchists, respectable/reasonable (non-confrontational) anarchism, as represented by the likes of

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Anarchist press review

Compiled by Alex Trotter, Steven Englander & Dave Mandl

Unfortunately, for the time being at least, *Anarchy* is no longer able to exchange with other periodicals until there are committed volunteers ready to handle subscriptions and mailings. However, we will continue to try to review periodicals received in future issues. All reviews in this issue are by Alex Trotter, except those marked [S.E.] for Steven Englander or [D.M.] for Dave Mandl.

Publishers please note: To ensure that your publications are reviewed in future issues, send all zines and magazines to our reviewer address: B.A.L. Press, POB 2647, Stuyvesant St., New York, NY 10009.

A Infos No. 18, April-July 1995 (Internat. Sec.—L.A.S., Postbus 61523, 2506 AM Den Haag, NETHERLANDS) 10-page bulletin on events in Nederland, grouped by category (e.g., labor/work/economy, fascism, drugs, women/health, ecology, antimilitarism). A-Infos bulletins are also available for several other countries, many in English. Addresses provided. Send a small contribution.

@News: Information Bulletin from Greece No. 13, April-June 1996 (Anarchist Intervention, P.O. Box 30577, Athens 10033, GREECE) "The social war goes on." Chronicle of demonstrations, direct action, cop violence. 4 pages, no price listed.

Angry People #11 (PO Box 108, St. Peters, NSW 2044, Australia) is a 16-page zine committed to revolutionary class struggle. This issue urges doing crimes against the rich, includes memoirs of a car thief, and exposes "Nexus," a New Age magazine of occult fascism. \$5/3 issues. [S.E.]

Blitz/Kaos? Newsletter No. 8 Autumn/Winter 1994-95 (Blitz Info-group, Pilestredet 30 c, 0164 Oslo, NORWAY) Only 1 page, front and back. Feminist action week, Norwegian politicians receive threats by mail, anti-European Union stuff, and reports on neonazis. No price listed.

Collective Action Notes No. 10, April-June 1996 (P.O. Box 22962, Baltimore, MD 21203; email: cansv@lgc.apc.org) Eight-page tabloid that chronicles recent strikes, riots, and demonstrations around the world. Subscriptions: \$7/year. Texts by council communist Anton Pannekoek available as well.

ContraFLOW Jul/Aug 1996 (56a Infoshop, 56 Crampton St., London SE17, ENGLAND; email: contraflow@phreak.intermedia.co.uk) 4-page tabloid published by the European Counter Network. This issue: class struggle in the West End, Indonesian military repression in E. Timor and West Papua, protests by prisoners. Also, calendar of events and notice of discussion groups at the Infoshop. Free, but trade or donation appreciated.

Counter Information No. 46 June-Aug. 1996 (c/o Transmission Gallery, 28 King St., Glasgow G1 5QP SCOTLAND) news briefs about working-class struggles local and global, 4 pages. Strikes by postal workers in Scotland, dockers in Liverpool, textile workers in London; actions by rural squatters in Brazil. Includes list of anarchist contacts in Scotland. Free, but donation appreciated.

Crash & Burn No. 1, Winter 1997 (c/o Lelf Frederickson, Maildrop 1818, 124 Raymond Ave., Poughkeepsie, NY 12601) "The Journal of violent Intimacy." 10 pages, xeroxed. Brief statements, with a situationist flavor, about culture, critique of the pleasure principle, morality and mortality. Available for one dollar or two stamps.

Démanarchie Vol. 2 No. 3, April/May 1996 (C.P. 301 Haute-ville, Quebec, QC, G1R 4P8 and C.P. 32 100, Montreal, QC, H2L 4Y5 CANADA) 16-page tabloid, mostly in French, but including an English-language section. Has a punk/leftist orientation. This issue: Fuck you nationalists, Montreal police spying on activists, Christian attack on queers. \$10 (Canadian) for five issues.

Discussion Bulletin #75 Jan-Feb. 1996 (PO Box 1564, Grand Rapids, MI 49501) Is a forum for discussion and debate among libertarian socialists of various persuasions and tendencies. This ish includes "The Truth About the Information Superhighway," "wage workers in Faridabad," "Why Socialism?" by Albert Einstein, reviews, letters, more. Subs: \$3.00. [S.E.]

Drapetomania! premiere issue (Charles A. Human Jr., 505 Woodlawn St. #229, Belmont, NC 28012; email: liberty@cit.mindspring.com) 14-page zine devoted to "the uncontrollable urge to escape slavery." Anti-television but pro-computer. Reviews of the Millennium Whole Earth Catalog and the Loompanics Catalog. Plus "A Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace" by John Perry Barlow. \$3.00 for the next issue.

Ego Nos. 16-17, 1994 (c/o S. E. Parker, 19 St. Stephen's Gardens, London W2 5QU, ENGLAND) A celebration of Max Stirner's *The Ego and Its Own* on its 150th anniversary, this issue of *Ego* is a collection of essays in praise of the individualist-anarchist classic. Included are an analysis of the text, a personal coming-of-age account, and discussions of individualism's continuing appeal and applicability to young people today ("The Ego and Its Own: The Choice of a New Generation"). Note: *Ego* has now been incorporated into Svein Nyberg's Internet zine *Non-Serviam*; *Ego's* publisher, S. E. Parker, now publishes an occasional newsletter/broadsheet, *En Marge*, available from the above address. (No price listed.) [D.M.]

Egoism Rules 2nd Issue (Jacob v. Lennepkade 120b, 1053 MS Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS; phone: 020-6893486) The Fellowship of the Axe is back with another issue, though not as much fun as the first. Here we have the "philosophy of social-egoism," passages from Emile Cloran, interview with Henry Rollins, and material reprinted from BAD Brigade, Hakim Bey, John Zerzan, and Stewart Home. "The übermensch is the egoist in everyone." Some cartoons and letters too. Send them a gift, an essay, a drawing, whatever, and you'll get the next issue.

Fifth Estate Vol. 31 No. 1, Spring 1996 (4632 Second Ave., Detroit, MI 48201) 30th anniversary issue. Includes the history of FE (part one), the Detroit newspaper strike, the Michigan roots of Leon Czolgosz, paradise gardening, more nationalist follies in Quebec, IMF and oil companies' relationship to Nigerian military dictatorship, repression of dissent in the United States during World War I, and a remembrance of Fredy Perlman. Plus book reviews and "On Gogol Boulevard." Single issue: \$2.00; subscription: \$6.00/four issues (\$8.00 outside U.S.A.)

Fragments No. 1 (P.O. Box 5370-362, Santa Ana, CA 92704; email: 74247@compuserve.com) Desktop-published, 36 pages of rumination about disintegration and decadence, with emphasis on the Los Angeles rebellion of 1992. Favors social revolution, but considers the possibility that we are doomed. Rips into conservatives such as William Bennett. \$3.00 (cash only) for next issue.

Freedom Vol. 56, #21 Nov. 1995 (Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX, England) This issue of the august anarchist paper includes the history of cooperatives in Quebec, riots in Tahiti due to French nuclear testing, the politics of penal reform, brief notes, and more. \$1.00/issue. [S.E.]

G.A.W.E. (UnruLEE, 4743 Hlawatha Ave. S., #116, Minneapolis, MN 55406) Is the official organ of the Gardeners Against Work Ethic Association. This 16-page zine celebrates zero-work,

gardens, schiz-flux, eroplay, Deleuzian delirium, "creative defiance," "collective breakout," "a new way of life based on play." \$1.00 (or trade?) [S.E.]

Here and Now Nos. 16/17 (c/o Transmission Gallery, 28 King Street, Glasgow G1 5QP SCOTLAND) one of the best critical theory journals is back with a 60-page double issue whose theme is the abandonment of the human (by both cyberculture and deep ecology). Other articles on Bosnia, Chechnya, Italian political crisis, and the ongoing feuds in the UK radical milieu (includes a Monopoly-esque board game), and book and film reviews. Comes with a 28-page supplement of retrospectives on Guy Debord: metaphysics of marxism, aesthetics of revolution, parallels between the Situationists and the Rosicrucians, and some arrant guff from Stewart Home. Rates: three issues cost £3.50 in UK, £5.50 surface outside UK (or £7.00 airmail).

Kick It Over #35 (J) This issue is devoted to work. L. Susan Brown recommends its destruction, Neala Schleuning celebrates the work ethic and recommends tinkering with the "nature" of work, Bruce Allen examines *agile manufacturing*, a relatively new method of organizing work and streamlining the production process, Graham Purchase looks at syndicalism, technology and the environment. Also: reviews, poetry, morality & ethics, news and info. 76 pages. \$12/4 issues. [S.E.]

The Leaves of Twin Oaks No. 82, Fall 1996 (138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093; e-mail: Steve@twin Oaks.org) Six-page newsletter of the Twin Oaks intentional community, with news of what's going on there and in other federated "egalitarian communities." No specific price listed, send small contribution.

Libertarian Labor Review No. 20, Spring/Summer 1996 (P.O. Box 2824, Champaign, IL 61825) magazine of "Anarchosyndicalist Ideas and Discussion," 46 pages. This issue: Jobless economic recovery, limits of labor reform, the Spanish CGT and CNT, obituary for Albert Meltzer. Single issue: \$3.50; \$12 for four issues.

No Nation Bulletin #21 Autumn 1995 (Soren Groth, Erikshallsgraten 40, 151 46 Sodertälje, Sweden) is a 20-page xerox newsletter of the People to People Friendship Association and promotes individual rights and dignity, mutual aid, ecological and social responsibility and a "free and manifold world culture." Includes info from members of their network from around the world. \$6/4 issues. [S.E.]

Not Bored! No. 25, June 1996 (P.O. Box 1115, New York, NY 10009; email: Rose@thorn.net) Not Debord. 80-page xeroxed "situationist fanzine." Rants dissing the Unabomber's manifesto, Stewart Home, and Keith Sanborn's screening of the film *Society of the*

Alternative Media Review

Spectacle; other pieces on situationist theory of music, Vaneigem's *Movement of the Free Spirit*, and the American section of the Situationist International. This issue includes an index to the first 25 issues of *NB*. No price listed; trade or contribution.

Oblivion No. 3 (P.O. Box 4011, Seattle, WA 98104) 54-page "journal of urban semiotics and spatial practices." This issue documents the marathon drifting adventures of a pair of Schiz-flux urban nomads through several American cities as they seek out ludic and enchanting experiences and apply the theories of Foucault, Bataille, Nietzsche, Walter Benjamin, and the Situationists to everyday life. Includes helpful tips on detouring billboards and advertisements on public transportation. Excellent and highly entertaining. No price listed; send a trade, a proposal, or something for review.

Organise! No. 42, Spring 1996 (ACF, c/o 84b Whitechapel High St., London E1 7QX, ENGLAND) Quarterly publication, 28 pp., of the Anarchist Communist Federation, an organization that sees itself as part of the tradition of Bakunin, Kropotkin, Malatesta, and the Friends of Durruti ("class struggle anarchism"). Mad cows, analyses of ceasefire in Northern Ireland and "peace" in ex-Yugoslavia, road protests, history of anarchist communism in Britain. Sub rate: £4 for four issues (add 25 percent outside UK); free to prisoners.

Out of Bounds #4 Fall, 1995 (P.O. Box 5108, Arlington, VA 22205) is a non-sectarian, wide-ranging anarchist magazine. It includes short pieces like "Pissing on the Work Ethic" and "Interference on the Internet" as well as articles on the U.S. role in recent Guatemalan Death Squad murders, militant hate groups and right-wing conspiracy-mongering, and journalistic media. Also letters and plenty of reviews. Intelligent, unpretentious and reader-friendly. \$12/4 issues. [S.E.]

Passion Brigade #11, Winter, '95 (BM Box 207, London, VC1N 3XX England) Anarchy equals Sexlib for this 20-page zine that embraces the lesbian and gay freedom movement. Full of info, opinion and support. Fervent, friendly fun. One buck? [S.E.]

Plebeian premier issue, autumn 1996 (Foothills Zine Distribution, P.O. Box 220, Fort Collins, CO 80522) xeroxed 46-page zine inspired by *Temp Slave* (this issue contains a lengthy interview with Keffo), with decided antiwork tendency. Reviews of the films *Caligula*, *Wall Street*, *JFK*, and the BBC adaptation of Robert Graves's *I, Claudius*. Excerpts from the editor's journal of life in Fort Collins. This issue costs \$2.50.

The Poor, the Bad and the Angry No. 2 (P.O. Box 3305, Oakland, CA 94609) "A magazine for power-hungry proletarians," 38 pages. Actually more marxist than anarchist, promotes class struggle and claims broad affinity with situationists, left-communists, and even zerowork. This issue is focused primarily on fighting public transportation price hikes in San Francisco. Other articles include the "Macedonian Question" and squatting unused buildings. Single copy: \$3; free to prisoners and soldiers on request.

Popular Reality (P.O. Box 1782, Jackson, MI 49204) a Pop-Real "special report" on "Big Bad Bob Black," tabloid, 12 pages, concerning the Hogshire affair in Seattle. In defense of Bob Black. No price mentioned; try a small contribution or maybe a simple request for a copy.

Profane Existence No. 26, Fall 1995 (P.O. Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408; email: trollpe@aol.com) Fifty-four-page punkzine with extensive coverage of international anarchist news in addition to the usual band interviews and record reviews. In this issue: reports from Greece, including an account of battles between squatters and nazis in Athens and a first-hand account (from prison) of a failed bank robbery; an update on the ongoing legal woes of Free Radio Berkeley; coverage of recent riots in Germany and the activities of the National Front in France; and a lengthy report, complete with some stunning photos, on "Chaos Days '95" in Hannover, Germany. (\$1 in shops, \$2 by mail; free to prisoners.) [D.M.]

Radical Pizza Summer 1996 (Conspiracy M.E.D.I.A. Box 158324, Nashville, TN 37215) 40-page zine providing "food for thought" is back after a three-year absence. This issue includes an

attack on Bill Clinton, a defense of hemp, 'artificial intelligence' as an expression of a quest for immortality, a criticism of TV, pirate radio, cellular phones and privacy, and an appreciation of the late Timothy Leary. Issue costs \$3.00.

Radio Resistor's Bulletin (P.O. Box 3038, Bellingham, WA 98227; email: haulgren@well.com) Newsletter that serves as a forum for discussion of issues involving noncommercial radio (with anarchist participation). \$1.00 per issue, sample for a SASE or stamp.

Red & Black No. 25, Spring 1995 (P.O. Box 12, Quanaa, N.S.W., 2550, AUSTRALIA) 44-page anarchist journal. Articles this issue: "Identity and Anarchism," "Frustration" (about anarchists trying to disrupt a convention of Willis Carto's Populist Party), "The War in Maya's Land" (review of book by that title by Yvon Le Bot about guerrillas in Guatemala), and "Violence and Solidarity." Annual sub is \$6.00 Aus.

Rukus premier issue, March/April 1996 (P.O. Box 40067, Waterloo, ON N26 4V1 CANADA) Anarcho-leftist publication, 18 pp., intended to be bimonthly, in affinity with *Love and Rage*, *The Blast*, and *Free Society*. "Reporting acts and movements of resistance against all forms of oppression and injustice in Canada and abroad." This issue: Somali refugees fight Immigration Act, Canadian gov't. and child slave labor, Toronto's poverty crisis. An issue costs 50 cents (Canadian).

Temp Slave No. 8 (Keffo, P.O. Box 8284, Madison, WI 53708) 56-page zine chronicling the struggles of the new proletariat—temp workers, as told in first-person narratives. This issue concentrates on the experience of working temp or underground in foreign countries. Got a story of your own? Send it to Keffo. Issue is \$2; complete back issues (1-7) available for \$14.

Vamped premier issue, August 1996 (P.O. Box 1623, Greeley, CO 80632) xeroxed punkzine, 40 pages, about such things as killing rapists, freeing Mumia Abu-Jamal and Leonard Peltier, monkeywrenching, anti-vivisection, for the Zapatistas, against Nazis. Price: \$1.50.

Wild Wasatch Front March 1996 (Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, 1471 South 1100 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84105) Newsletter of an Earth First! affiliate, 10 pages. Fighting against industrial tourism and paved highways through the wilderness of Utah's canyon country. Brief typewritten items about monkeywrenching, Free Peltier campaign, big business doing business in China. Annual sub (membership) costs \$25. If you want only a sample copy, try sending a trade.

Windfall Vol. 16, no. 1, Spring 1996 (East Wind Community, Tecumseh, MO 65760; email: visit@eastwind.org) newspaper published by intentional community founded in 1973 and devoted to "equality, ecological awareness, cooperation, and nonviolence." This issue: an "ourstory" of the community, managing without hierarchy, living by laws of the wild, bylaws, how conflicts within the community are resolved. No subscription fee, but send a contribution.

Zaginflat No. 007, Feb. 1996 (ZAP/ARK, Tkalčićeva 38, 10 000 Zagreb, CROATIA) Infosheet, 4 pages, about the situation in ex-Yugoslavia (mostly Croatia), in English. Promotes peace initiatives, human rights, animal rights, and punk rock. Trade or contribution.

Non-English-language materials

El Acratador No. 43, March 1995 (Ateneo Libertario, Apdo. 3141, 50080 Zaragoza, SPAIN; email: acratador@met.unizar.es) 12-page anarch zine, "bulletin of counterinformation," desktop published. Fascist and antifascist actions in Spain, criticism of the UGT, Guy Debord obituary, news about strikes and police brutality. Ten issues for 500 pesetas.

Agência de Notícias Anarquistas July-Oct. 1995 (Caixa Postal 3297 São Paulo S.P., Cep 01060-970 BRAZIL) 4 pp., front and back, xeroxed. Anarcho-punk rocker news bulletin in Portuguese. Anti-Nazi, anti-McDonald's, etc. No price listed; send a "do-it-yourself" trade.

Anarkhikh Parembash November 1995 (Anarchist Intervention, P.O. Box 300557, 10033 Athens, GREECE) 12-



Ekintza Zuzena

page newspaper whose cover features the black flag with circle-A. Illustrated with some photos and cartoons. Seems to have a militant attitude. No price in U.S. currency.

O Anarkhikos Nos. 112 and 113 (ABC, Aristidou 8, 10559 Athens, GREECE) 16-page publication, with black flags and circle-A's. Has crossword puzzle, picture of Mumia Abu-Jamal, and an ad for Greenpeace. No price in U.S. currency; try trading.

CNT No. 190, November 1995 (c/Mollinos, 64, 18009 Granada, SPAIN) 16-page tabloid published by the anarcho-sindicalist Confederación del Trabajo. Miners of the Asturias, history of the CNT, news from Zaragoza and the Canary islands, movie column about the French director Claude Chabrol. 100 pesetas per issue.

Correo A No. 28, November 1995 (N. Méndez, Fac. Ingeniería, UCV, Caracas 1051 VENEZUELA) Anarchist zine 20 pp., with green and feminist focus. Articles (some reprinted from *Freedom* and *The Raven* in Spanish trans.): mining and ecocide, Chomsky interview, the 1848 feminist convention at Seneca Falls, New York, computers and anarchism, and the Ken Loach film *Land and Liberty* (about the Spanish revolution). Price for issue: 30 bolívares.

Derive Approdi No. 8 (Labirinto, Riviera di Chiava 124, 90122 Napoli, ITALY) Arty and erotic 80-page magazine in Italian devoted mostly to punk and independent music scenes. Also has articles on cinema and situationist theory, and lots of photos and comic strips. The material herein has no copyright. Issue is 10,000 lire. Try trading.

EKintza Zuzena (Ediciones E.Z., Apdo. 235, 48080 Bilbao, SPAIN) 64-page anarchist magazine, mostly in Spanish, but partly in Basque. This issue: "Let's destroy work," end of Taylorism and Fordism?, against automobiles, for anticapitalist ecology, the future of the feminist movement, insurrection in Turkey, Mexican Amor y Rabia, and a fake newspaper section called "LSD Herald Tribune." US \$14.00 gets you a year's sub.

Enciclopèdic Noticiari No. 6 March 1995 (CDHS-AEP, apartat de Correus no. 22.212, 08080 Barcelona, SPAIN) 16-page bulletin of the Center for Historico-Social Documentation in Catalonia. Material about Francisco Ferrer and other historical notes, plus news of anarchist activities in Barcelona. Where else are you going to get a publication written in Catalan? No price listed, but be sure to send something.

Kleintje Muurkrant September 15, 1995 (Muurkrantkollektief Den Bosch, Postbus 703, 5201 Den Bosch NETHERLANDS; email: kleintje@teleinfo.aps.nl) The tiny wall newspaper from Holland, 8 pp. Stories about Scientology, a Nazi named Richard van der

Plas, Zhirinovsky and the Russian Right. Annual sub is 25 guilders.

Koinonikh Armonia No. 11 (no address in English). 8-page anarchist publication in Greek. Freedom Press is mentioned in here, otherwise no indication as to content.

Le Libertaire No. 159 (25 rue Dumé d'Aplemont, 7660 Le Havre, FRANCE) 6-page anarchist newspaper in French. Seems to have a pacifist orientation. For unilateral disarmament, against French gov't. nuclear testing. Includes movie and video reviews, featuring several films by John Waters. B.A.L. is listed here as the "Baltimore Anarchist League"! One issue costs 9 FF.

Liberecana Ligilo No. 2 Feb. 1995 (67 Av. Gambetta, Paris 75020 FRANCE) 8-page bulletin in Esperanto. Stuff in here about Kropotkin and the Cuban Revolution. Try sending a buck or two.

MicrosMegma No. 1, 1995 (Paolo Rossi, Via Lorenzo Ghiberti, 8, 40138 Bologna, ITALY; email: nav0243@iperbole.bologna.it) 32-page "cosmic fuckzine." Material by Bob Black, Critical Art Ensemble, Guy Debord, Encyclopedie des Nuisances, Abbie Hoffman, and Paul Z. Simons, among others, in Italian translation. An issue costs US \$4.75.

De Nar No. 109 October 1995 (De Nar VZW, Postbus 104, 1210 Brussel 21, BELGIUM) Anarchist periodical in Dutch language (means "The Fool"). News about mostly European actions, calendar of events including punk rock gigs, interesting cartoons. An issue costs 20 Belgian francs.

Ta Paidia Tis Galaras No. 5 (P.O. Box 76149, Nea Smirni 17110, Athens, GREECE) Left-marxist journal in Greek, 50 pp. This issue: theses on petit-bourgeois mentality and counterculture in Greece, critique of the Zapatistas, documents from the youth revolt in France (March/April 1994), debate with an anarchist on nationalism in the Balkans. Material in English is also available from this group. Send a trade or a few dollars.

Perspectief No. 43, April-June 1996 (Dracenastraat 21, 9000 Gent, BELGIUM) Dutch-language anarchist journal, 64 pp. Articles on Albania, anarchism in postmodernity, anti-psychiatry manifesto, Zapatistas and the national revolution, work as opium of the people. No illustrations this issue. Year's sub: 400 Belgian francs.

Le Po?nt d'Interrogations 1995 (Hème, c/o i.s., B.P. 159, 75562 Paris Cedex 12, FRANCE) Five essays (in French), 14 pp. On revolutionary terrorism, against workerism, extracts from the youthful writings of Victor Serge, environmental questions, and "Long live the recession!" illustrated with cartoons. No price listed, trade or contribution.

Renegados (Mario R., AP 96-071, 07771, Mexico D.F., MEXICO) A Spanish-language fanzine "on the margin of the publishing industry" with a plagiarized content. 34 pp. newsprint. Articles: "Utopia for the 21st Century," cyberpunk as digital counterculture, virtual reality, positions of the EZLN at Mexico's National Democratic Convention, and body piercing. No price listed, trade or contribution.

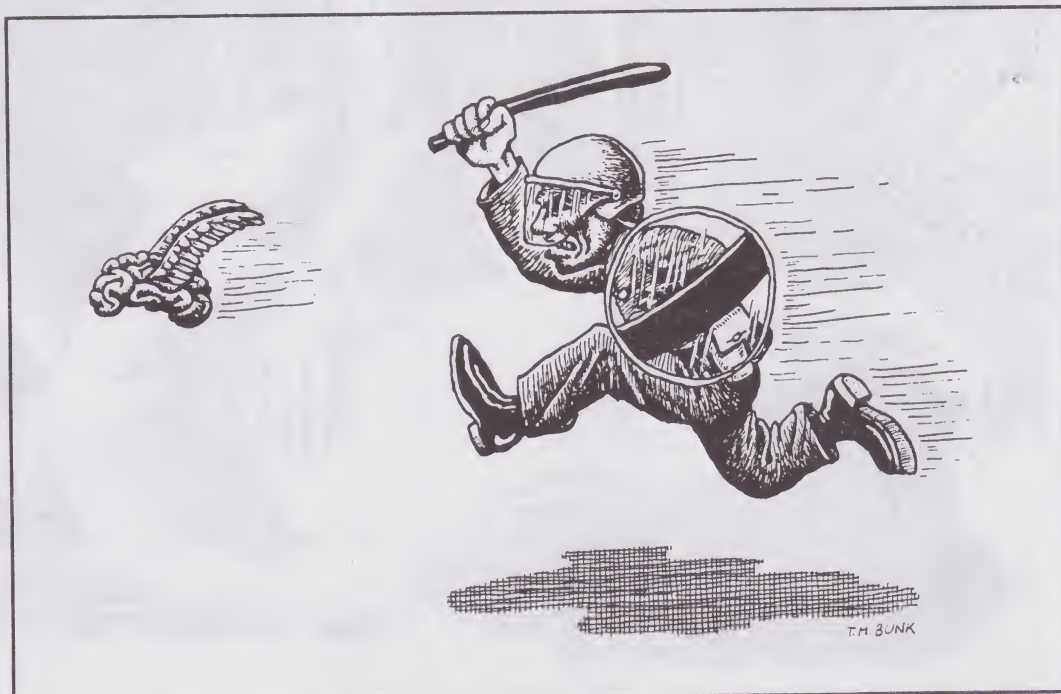
Die Rote Hilfe Feb 1995 (Konto-Nr. 191100-462, Postbank Dortmund, BLZ 44010046, GERMANY) Leftist magazine, 40pp., in German. Antifascist news, support for Mumia Abu-Jamal and Basque prisoners in Spain. Freiheit für die Gummibärchen! DM 2.50 for one issue, DM 15 for a year.

Schwarzer Faden No. 55, April 1995 (PF 1159, D-71117 Grafenau, GERMANY) 68-page anarchist magazine, trying to be both green and workerist. This issue: Neonazis and antilaboration fanatics, situation in Guatemala, film *Land and Freedom* by English director Ken Loach, and homage to Rudolf Rocker. DM 7 for one issue, DM 30 for five.

Solidaridad Obrera October 1995 (c/Hospital no. 115 bajos, 08001-Barcelona, SPAIN) Regional organ of the anarcho-sindicalist CNT, 8pp. tabloid. French nuclear testing, feminism in Barcelona, the centenary of the cinema & an article stating that anarcho-sindicalism "does not exist as a doctrine or ideology, but as a metaphor, a euphemism...." Foreign subs 130 FF.

Svododna Mus'l (Alexandar Nakov, UI. "Republika" N4, 2309 Pernik, BULGARIA) 8-page tabloid in Bulgarian. Don't have a clue what it's about.

Telegraph Summer 1995 (Schliemannstrasse 22, 10437 Berlin, GERMANY; email: telegraph@vberlin.comlink.de) 70-page zine-size journal with focus on the former East Germany. Protests against French atomic tests in the South Pacific, Russia's ongoing war in Chechnya. Has some really interesting photos of German cops. DM 4 per issue (no U.S. dollar price listed).





James Koeffline

The Revolution of Everyday Life

Chapter

22

by
Raoul
Vaneigem

A¹s the specialists organize the survival of the species, and assign the programming of history to their sophisticated blueprints, they will to change life by changing the world grows ever stronger among the mass of people. The point has been reached where each specific individual finds himself face to face, just like humanity as a whole, with a general despair with no issues save annihilation or transcendence. Ours is a time in which historical and individual development tend to merge because both are headed in the same direction—towards the state of a *thing* and the refusal of this state. The history of the species and the millions of individual histories would be entering into concert, either to die or to being *everything* afresh. In this way the past returns to us, bearing the seeds of death along with the spark of life. And our childhood too is at the rendezvous—under the threat of Lot's curse.

This threat, we must hope, will provoke an upsurge of revolt against the ghastly aging process to which the forced feeding of ideology and useless commodities obliges the child. The realization of the potential of childhood must surely imply the realization of the old masters' project—a project which is thus destined to be carried through by us, adults of the technocratic era, rich in what children lack, strong precisely where the greatest conquerors were weakest. We are the ones to whom it will fall to combine collective history and individual destiny in ways surpassing the wildest dreams of a Tamerlane or a Heliogabalus.

The primacy of life over survival is the historical movement which will undo history. The construction of everyday life and the realization of history are hence-

The Space-Time of Lived Experience

The dialectic of decomposition and transcendence is also that of dissociated and unitary space-time (1). The new proletariat carries within itself the capacity for realizing childhood and the space-time of childhood (2). The history of separations tends slowly towards a resolution in the "historicizing" goal of history (3). Cyclical versus linear time. Lived space-time is the space-time of transformation, whereas the space-time of roles is that of stagnation. The function of the past and its projection into the future is the outlawing of the present. Historical ideology is the screen which comes between the will to individual self-realization and the will to make history, preventing any fraternization or confusion between them (4). The present is a space-time yet to be created (5).

forward one and the same project. In what will the joint construction of a new life and a new society consist? What will be the nature of the revolution of every-

The crystalline space of daily life steals a portion of "external" time, and...creates a small area of unitary space-time for itself. This is the space-time of the privileged moment, of creativity, of pleasure, of orgasm.

day life? Simply this: transcendence will replace decay, as the consciousness of reality of decay feeds the consciousness of the necessity for transcendence.

No matter how far back in history, all previous attempts at transcendence are part and parcel of the present reversal of perspective. They play a part in it directly, without mediation, leaping over the barriers of space and time—and, indeed, breaking those barriers down. Without a doubt, the end of separation begins with the end of one particular separation—that between space and time. And, as we have seen, the restitution of this primordial unity presupposes the critical analysis of childhood's space-time, of the space-time of unitary societ-

ies and of the fragmentary societies which embody the dialectic of decomposition and the long-awaited possibility of transcendence.

2

If care is not taken, survival sickness can soon turn a young person into a haggard old Faust, burdened down with regrets and yearning for a youth through which he passes without so much as realizing it. The teenager bears the first wrinkles of the consumer. Little distinguishes him from a sixty-year-old. He consumes faster and faster, and the more he gives in to inauthenticity, the sooner he is rewarded with a precocious entry into old age. If he is slow to get a grip on himself, the past will close up behind him: he will have no further chance to return to what he has done, even for the purpose of redoing it. So much separates him from the children he played with only yesterday. He has entered the trivial domain of the market, willingly giving up the poetry, freedom and subjective riches of childhood in exchange for an image in spectacular society. And yet, if only he and his like would pull themselves up short and fight their way out of the nightmare, the forces of order would be faced with a truly redoubtable opponent. An opponent capable, in defense of his childhood, of turning the most fearsome weapons of technocracy against their doting inventors. We have not forgotten the extraordinary prowess displayed by the young Simbas of Lumumba's revolution, the primitiveness of their arms notwithstanding; how much more may we expect from a generation every bit as enraged, but armed much more efficiently and loosed upon a battleground extending to every corner of everyday life!

For, in a sense, every sphere of everyday life is experienced embryonically in childhood. The child packs such a horde of events into a few days or even a few hours that his time does not trickle away like an adult's. Two months vacation is an eternity for him. For an old man two months is a fleeting moment. The child's days escape adult time—they are time swollen by subjectivity, by passion, by dreams inhabited by reality. Outside this

universe the educators wait patiently, watch in hand, for the child to join in the round dance of adult time. It is they who *have time*. At first the child experiences adults' imposition of their kind of time on him as an intrusion; but eventually he capitulates, and consents to grow old. Innocent of the ways of conditioning, he falls like some young animal into the snare. Later on, when he is possessed of the arms of criticism and eager to turn them against the time in which he is imprisoned, the years will have carried him too far from his target. But his childhood will remain within him like an open wound.

So here we all are, haunted by a childhood which social organization seeks by scientific means to destroy. The psychosociologists are on the lookout, while the market researchers are already exclaiming, "Look at all those little dollars!" (Vance Packard). A new decimal system.

Children are playing in the street. One of them suddenly leaves the group, comes up to me and tells me some of the most beautiful dreams I have ever heard. He teaches me something, which had I but known it would have saved me, namely, the thing that destroys the notion of age, the capacity for living a multitude of events—not just watching them flow by, but truly living and constantly recreating them. And now that I find myself at a point where all this is beyond my grasp, yet where all has become clear to me, is it any wonder that an untamed instinct for wholeness erupts in me from beneath so many strata of false desires—a type of childishness whose subversive force is demonstrated by all the lessons of history and of the class-struggle? Who, if not the new proletariat, is to be entrusted with the task of realizing childhood in the adult world?

We are the discoverers of a world both new and well known, a world lacking only unity of time and space. A world still shot through with separations, still fragmented. The semi-barbarity of our bodies, our needs and our spontaneity (childhood refined by consciousness), give us secret access to places never discovered by centuries of aristocratic rule, and never so much as dreamt of by the bourgeoisie. In this way we are able to enter the maze of unfinished civiliza-

tions and approach all the embryonic attempts at transcendence surreptitiously conceived by history. Our desire to retrieve the past which is still close to us, and in a sense still unfulfilled, emerges a new topography of the passions.

3

Being motion within immobility, the time of unitary societies is cyclical. As they follow their course, beings and things move around the circumference of the circle whose center is God. This God-pivot, unchanging yet at once nowhere and everywhere, is the measure of the duration of an eternal power. He is his own standard, and the standard of all things, which gravitate equidistantly around him, evolving, progressing or regressing, but never completely expending themselves and never in fact escaping from their orbit. "*La treizième reient, c'est encor la première*" (Nerval).

As for the *space* of unitary systems, its organization is determined by time. Since there is no time but God's, no space seems to exist aside from that which God controls. This space extends from the center to the circumference, from heaven to earth, from the one to the many. At first sight, time seems irrelevant here: it takes one neither closer to God nor further from him. On the contrary, the way to God appears to be spatial in character: the upward paths of spiritual elevation and hierarchical promotion. Time belongs to God and God alone, whereas the space granted men acquires a specifically human and irreducible quality. Men can ascend or descend, rise or fall in the social world, guarantee their salvation or risk damnation. Space means the presence of man: it is the dimension of relative freedom; time imprisons him within its circle. And what is the meaning of the Last Judgment, if not the idea that God will one day gather time in to himself once more, the center sucking in the circumference and concentrating the entirety of the space imparted to his creatures into this impalpable point? This desire to obliterate the materiality of the human (*i.e.*, human occupation of space) is clearly the project of a master incapable of completely possessing his slave, and hence incapable of not being partly

possessed by him.

Duration has space on a leash; it drags us towards death, eroding the space which is our life. In the course of history, however, this distinction is not always so clearly apparent. Feudal societies are societies of separations, just as bourgeois societies are, for separation is the corollary of privative appropriation. But feudalism's advantage here lies in its immense ability to mystify.

Myth has the power to bridge separations and make a unitary life possible. Such a life is inauthentic, it is true, but at least inauthenticity is One, and unanimously accepted by a coherent community (tribe, clan, kingdom). God is the image or symbol of the transcendence of dissociated space and time. Everyone who "lives" in God partakes of this transcendence. The majority take part in a mediated way. They conform, in other words, within the confines of their everyday life, to the exigencies of a duly hierarchical space extending upwards from mere mortals to priests, to chiefs, to God. As reward for such submission they receive the gift of eternal life, duration without space, pure temporality in God.

There were those, however, who cared little for this arrangement. Instead, they dreamed of an eternal present conferred by an absolute mastery of the world. One is constantly struck by the analogy between the crystalline space-time of children and the great mystics' yearning for unity. Thus Gregory of Palamas described "illumination" as a sort of insubstantial consciousness of unity (1381): "The light exists outside space and time...He who partakes of divine energy becomes in a sense Light himself; he becomes one with Light, and, like Light, he is fully aware of everything that remains obscure to those who have not received such grace."

This confused aspiration, which was bound to remain unclear if not inexpressible, has been popularized and clarified thanks to the transient bourgeois era. The bourgeoisie made this aspiration concrete by administering the *coup de grâce* to the aristocracy and its spiritualism, and it made it realistic by virtue of its own thoroughgoing decomposition. The history of separations comes slowly to an end with the end of separations themselves. The feudal uni-

tary illusion gradually becomes embodied in the libertarian unity of a life freely constructed, in a world lying beyond the world of materially guaranteed survival.

4

Einstein's speculations about space and time are in their own way a reminder of the death of God. Once myth no longer papered over the crack between space and time, consciousness fell heir to a malaise which gave rise to the heyday of Romanticism (the pull of the exotic, nostalgic feelings about the passage of time, etc.).

What is time, to the bourgeois mind? No longer God's time, it has become Power's—and fragmentary Power's at that. A triturated time whose unit of measurement is the instant—that instant which is a feeble echo of cyclical time. No longer the circumference of a circle, but rather a finite and infinite straight line. No longer a mechanism synchronizing each individual with God's time, but rather a sequence of states in which everyone chases after themselves, but in vain, as though the curse of Becoming somehow damned us to see nothing but our own backs, the human face remaining unknown, inaccessible, ever in the future. No longer a circular space encompassed by the eye of the Almighty lying at its center, but rather a series of tiny points which, though seemingly independent, actually become an integral part, according to a specific order of succession, of the line they form as one follows the other.

In the middle ages time flowed—though it was always the same sand that passed back and forth between the two bulbs of the hourglass. As represented on the *circular* clock face, by contrast, time is dispensed unit by unit, and never returns. Such is the irony of forms: the new mentality took its form from a dead reality, and when the bourgeoisie gave a cyclical appearance to everything—from wristwatches to its half-assed humanist yearnings—what it was really dressing up in this way was the death of time, the death of its own time.

There is nothing for it, however: ours is the time of the watchmaker. Economic imperatives turn people into walking

chronometers, with the mark of what they are around their wrists. This is the temporality of work, progress, productivity, production deadlines, consumption and planning. The spectacle's time: time for a kiss, snapshot time. A proper time for everything and everything in its proper time. Time is money. Commodity-time, Survival-time.

Space is a point on the line of time, a place in the machine for changing future into past. Time controls lived space, but it does so from without, by causing it to pass, by making it transitory. The space of the individual life is not a pure space, however, nor is the time that sweeps it on a pure temporality. Let us examine the situation a little more closely.

Each terminal point on the temporal line is specific and unique, yet no sooner is the next point added than its predecessor disappears into the line's uniformity, mere grist to the mill of a past which draws no distinctions. It becomes quite indiscernible. Thus each point serves to extend the very line which will annihilate it.

This pattern of constant destruction and replacement is Power's way of enduring; but at the same time people encouraged to consume power destroy it and reinforce it by enduring. For if Power destroys everything it destroys itself, and if it destroys nothing it is destroyed. Power can only endure strung out between the two poles of this contradiction, a contradiction which the dictatorship of consumption aggravates day by day. Power's ability to last depends simply on the continuing existence of people, that is to say, on their permanent *survival*. This is why the problem of dissociated space-time is posed today in revolutionary terms.

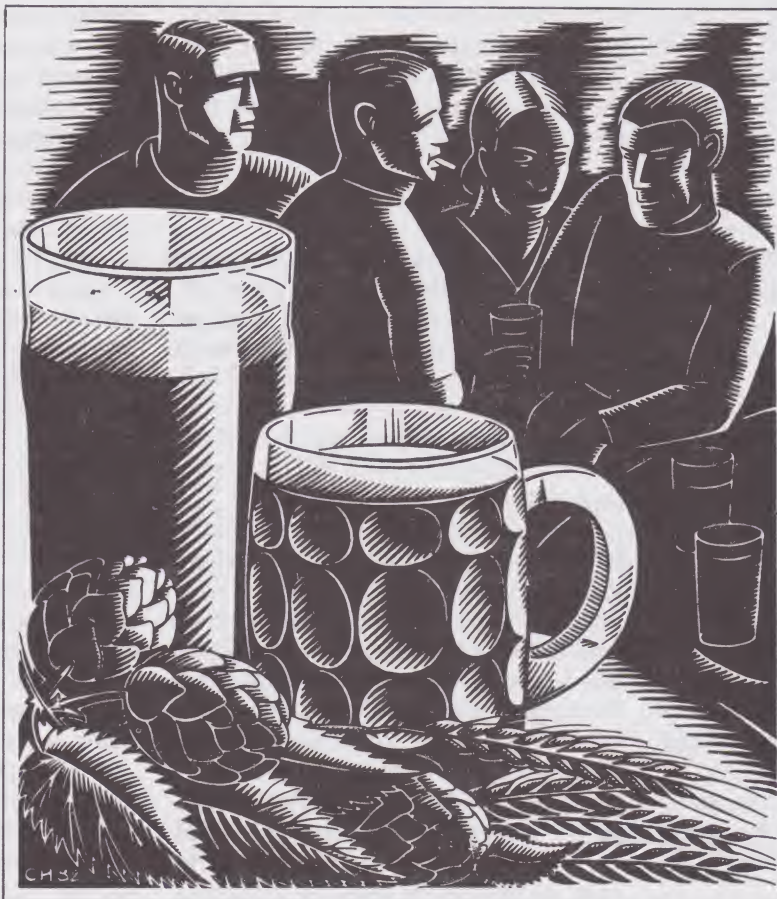
No matter that lived space is a universe of dreams, desires and prodigious creative impulses: in terms of duration, it is merely one point following another, and its emergence is governed by one principle only, that of its own annihilation. It appears, evolves and disappears into the anonymous line of the past, where its remains become raw material for flashes of memory and historical research.

The positive aspect of points of lived space is the fact that they may escape in part from generalized conditioning; on the debit side, they have no autonomous

existence. The space of daily life manages to divert a little time to its own uses, capturing and appropriating it. But by the same token time—which-flows-away insinuates itself into lived space and turns the sense of passing time, the sense of destruction and death, inwards.

The crystalline space of daily life steals a portion of "external" time, and thanks to this creates a small area of unitary space-time for itself. This is the space-time of the privileged moment, of creativity, of pleasure, of orgasm. The arena of this alchemy is minute, but it is experienced so intensely that it exercises an unrivalled fascination over most people. From Power's point of view, from the outside, such passionate moments are completely insignificant points, mere instants drained off from the future by the past. The line of objective time knows nothing—and wishes to know nothing—of the present as immediate subjective presence. As for subjective life, imprisoned within mere points—joy, gratification, reverie—it would rather know nothing of time which flows away, linear time, the time of things. On the contrary, it seeks full knowledge of its present, for, after all, it is only a present.

Lived space, then, filches a small portion of the time that sweeps it on and makes a present out of it—or at least it seeks to do so, for the present is everywhere still to be constructed. It seeks to create the unitary space-time of love, of poetry, of pleasure, of communication: direct experience without dead time. Meanwhile linear time—objective time, the time which flows away—invades the space that has fallen to daily life in the shape of negative time, dead time, the expression of the temporality of destruction. This is the time of *roles*, that time within life itself which encourages disembodiment, the



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repudiation of authentically experienced space, the repression of that space and its replacement by appearances, by the spectacular function. The space-time produced by this hybrid union is, quite simply, that of survival.

What is private life? It is the amalgamation within one instant, within one point on its way to annihilation along the line of survival, of a real space-time (the moment) and a false one (the role). Of course, the actual structure of private life does not conform strictly to this dichotomy, for interaction goes on all the time. Thus the prohibitions which hem daily life in from all sides, confining it to far too small a space, seek to transform it into roles, into commodities under the reign of the time-which-flows-away, to make it espouse pure repetition, and create, as accelerated time, the illusory space of appearances. In the meanwhile, however, the malaise produced by inauthenticity, by space experienced falsely, stimulates the search for a real time, for the time of subjectivity, for the present. So, in dialectical terms, private life is: *a real lived space + an*

illusory time + an illusory space + a real lived time.

The more illusory time conspires with the illusory space that it creates, the closer we come to being things, to being pure exchange value. The more the space of authentic life conspires with authentically lived time, the more human mastery asserts itself. Space-time lived in unitary fashion is the first *foco* of the coming guerilla war, the spark of the qualitative in the night that still shrouds the revolution of daily life.

Objective time does not only set out, therefore, to destroy crystalline space by thrusting it into the past, it also gnaws at it from within by attempting to impose on it that accelerated rhythm which creates the

role's density (the illusory space of roles is produced by the rapid repetition of an attitude, rather as the repetition of an image on film creates the illusion of life). The role invests subjective consciousness with the time-that-flows-away, the time of aging, of death. Here we have Artaud's "rut into which consciousness has been forced." Dominated from without by linear time, from within by the temporality of the role, subjectivity has no option but to become a thing, a prized commodity. History speeds this process up, moreover. In fact roles are now the consumption of time in a society where the official time is that of consumption. And here too the singlemindedness of oppression will bring about an equally singleminded opposition. What is death in our time? The absence of subjectivity, the absence of any present.

The will to live always reacts in unitary fashion. Most people have already really learnt how to divert time to the advantage of lived space. If only their efforts to increase the intensity of lived experience, to expand authentic space-

time, did not come to grief and confusion or break up on the reefs of isolation, who can say that objective time, the time of death, might not be smashed forever. After all, is not the revolutionary moment a fountain of eternal youth?

* * *

The project of enriching the space-time of direct experience presupposes a correct evaluation of the causes of its impoverishment. Linear time has no hold over people except in so far as it prohibits them from changing the world and so forces them to adapt to it. Freely radiating creativity is Power's public enemy number one. And creativity's strength lies in the unitary. How does Power attempt to smash the unity of lived space-time? By transforming lived experience into a commodity, launching it on the spectacular market, and abandoning it to the vicissitudes of supply and demand in the realm of roles and stereotypes. Further, by recourse to a particular kind of identification: the combined attraction of past and future annihilates the present. Lastly, by trying to co-opt the will to build a unitary space-time of lived experience (*i.e.*, to construct situations to be lived) and incorporate it into an ideology of history. Let us now examine these last two tactics.

* * *

From Power's viewpoint there is no such thing as lived moments (lived experience has no name): there is merely a sequence of interchangeable instants constituting the line of the past. A whole system of conditioning has been developed to mass-market this view of things, and all kinds of hidden persuasions help us internalize it. The results are not hard to see. Where has the present gone? Can it be skulking in some dark corner of daily existence? Hardly. The fact is that it has been obliterated.

All we have are things to look back on and things to look forward to, memory and anticipation. Meetings past and meetings future: two ghosts that haunt

us. Each passing second merely conveys me from the instant that has just been to the instant next to come. Each second spirits me away from myself; no *now* ever materializes. Empty commotion serves admirably to give everyone a fleeting quality, to pass the time (as we say so accurately), and even to make time pass right through people—in one side and out the other. Schopenhauer's "Before Kant we were in time; since

At first the child experiences adults' imposition of their kind of time on him as an intrusion; but eventually he capitulates, and consents to grow old. Innocent of the ways of conditioning, he falls like some young animal into the snare.

Kant time is in us" is a fine way of evoking the fact that consciousness is now informed by the temporality of growing old and decrepit. But it did not occur to Schopenhauer that what drove him as a philosopher to develop a mysticism of despair was precisely humanity's torment on the rack of a time reduced to an apparent disjunction between future and past.

A desperate vertigo is indeed the inevitable lot of someone torn between two instants, which he must forever pursue in zigzag fashion without ever reaching either—and without ever taking charge of himself. If only passionate expectation were involved here: you are under the spell of a past moment—a moment of love, for instance; the woman you love is about to reappear, you are sure of it, you already feel her kisses...such passionate expectation is in effect the prefigurement of the situation to be constructed. But most of the time, alas, the whirligig of memory and anticipation inhibits both the expectation and the experience of the present by sweeping it along in the millrace of dead time, a sequence of hollow instants.

For Power the future is simply a past reiterated. A dose of known inauthenticity is projected by an act of anticipatory imagination into a time which it fills in advance with its utter

vacuity. Our only memories are memories of roles once played, our only future a timeless remake. Human memory is supposed to answer to no requirement save Power's need to assert itself temporarily by constantly reminding us of its presence. And this reminder takes the form: *Nihil nove sub sole*—which being interpreted means "You always have to have leaders."

The future they try to sell me as "different time" is the perfect complement to the different space they try to sell me in which to let it all hang out. They are always telling us to change time, change skins, change fashions or change roles: alienation, it seems, is the only constant. Whenever "I am another," that other is condemned to hover between past and future. And roles *never* have a present. No wonder

they can supply no comfort, much less health: if a person can create no present—in the role, *here* is always elsewhere—how in the world can he expect to look back on a pleasant past or forward to a pleasant future?

* * *

Power's crowning achievement, in its attempt to trap people into identification with such a past-future, lies in its resort to historical ideology, which makes the individual and collective will to control history walk on its head.

Time is a form of mental perception, clearly not a human invention so much as a dialectical relationship with external reality; a relationship, therefore, dependent upon alienation, and upon humanity's struggle within and against alienation.

Animals, being entirely subject to the demands of adaptation, have no consciousness of time. Humans, however, refuse adaptation and attempt to change the world. Whenever they fail in this ambition to be a demiurge, they suffer the agony of having to adapt, the agony of knowing themselves reduced to animal-like passivity. Consciousness of the necessity for adaptation is also consciousness of time slipping by, which is why time is so intimately bound up with

human suffering. The more necessity for adaptation to circumstances overrides the desire and capacity for changing it, the tighter becomes the stranglehold of the consciousness of time. Survival sickness is simply an acute consciousness of the evanescence of alienated time and space, the consciousness of alienation. The rejection of the consciousness of growing old, along with the objective conditions of the senescence of consciousness, means that the will to make history has to be expressed more vigorously, more cogently, and more in accordance with the dictates of everyone's subjectivity.

An ideology of history has one purpose: to prevent people from making history. What better way could there be to distract people from their present than to draw them into that sphere where time slips away? This task falls to the historian.

He organizes the past, divides it up according to time's official line, and then assigns events to *ad hoc* categories. These easy-to-use categories put past events into quarantine. Solid parentheses isolate and contain them, preventing them from coming to life, from rising from the dead and running once more through the streets of our daily lives. The even it, so to speak, deep-frozen. It becomes illegal to retrieve it, remake it, complete it or attempt its transcendence. It is merely *there*, preserved forever in suspended animation, where the aesthetes can contemplate it at their ease. All it takes is a slight change of emphasis for this same past event to be transported into the future. The future is historians repeating themselves. The future historians foretell is a collage of memories—of all *their* memories. The much vaunted notion of the meaning of history has been so vulgarized by Stalinist thinkers that it has ended up stripping the future as well as the past of all humanity.

Prodded into identifying with another time and another personality, today's individual has let himself be robbed of his present in the name of historicism. His taste for authentic life has been lost in a spectacular space-time: "Comrades,

you are entering upon the stage of History!" Moreover, those who *reject* the heroism of historical commitment are beset by a complementary mystification in the psychological realm. History and psychology work hand in hand; the two categories fuse in the indigence of co-optation. The choice is between History and a nice quiet life.

Historic or not, all roles are in decay. The crisis of history and the crisis of

To construct the present is to rectify the past, to change the psychogeography of our surroundings, to hew our unfulfilled dreams and wishes out of the veinstone that imprisons them, to let individual passions find harmonious collective expression.

daily life are no longer distinct. An explosive mixture. The task now is to subvert history to subjective ends—and this with the participation of all humanity. Marx, be it said, never wished for anything less.

5

For the best part of a century the important movements in painting have been playing games, even joking, with space. Nothing was better equipped than artistic creativity to express the restless and impassioned search for a new lived space. And what better means than humor for venting the feeling that art could no longer provide much of a solution? (I am thinking of the early Impressionists, the Pointillists, the Fauvists, the Cubists, Dadaist collages and the first abstract painters.)

A malaise first felt by artists has, with the decay of art, come to affect the awareness of an ever-growing number of people. The construction of an art of life is now a widescale demand. Meanwhile there is a whole artistic past, the fruits of whose researches have been thrown carelessly aside: the time has come to concretize these discoveries in the context of an intensely experienced space-

time.

The memories to which I am referring are memories of mortal wounds. Things left unfinished rot. The past is mistakenly treated as irremediable. Ironically, the very people who would have us believe in the past as definitive spend all their time breaking it down, falsifying it and dolling it up according to the latest fashion. They are rather like poor Winston, in Orwell's *1984*, rewriting old official news items which have been contradicted by later developments.

There is only one valid way to forget: to wipe out the past by realizing it. Decay averted by transcendence. No matter how far back in time, the facts of the past have never spoken their last. A radical change in the present can always topple them from the museum shelf and bring them live within our grasp. There exists no more poignant

(nor, to my mind, more exemplary) testimony to the way the past may be rectified than that offered by Victor Serge in *Conquered City*: At the close of a lecture on the Paris Commune given at the height of the Bolshevik Revolution, a soldier rises ponderously from a leather armchair at the back of the room. "In low tones, but tones of authority, he was clearly heard to say, 'Tell us the story of Milière's execution.'"

"Erect, a giant of a man, his head bowed so that all you could see of his face was his great hairy jowls, sullen mouth and uneven, wrinkled brow—he put one in mind of Beethoven's death mask—he listened to the account of how Dr. Milière, in a dark blue overcoat and top hat, was dragged through the streets of Paris, forced to kneel on the steps of the Pantheon, crying 'Long live humanity!'—and the retort of the Versailles sentry leaning on a railing a few paces away: 'Fuck your humanity, and fuck you!'

"In the dark night of the unlit street outside the meeting hall, the burly peasant approached the lecturer...He clearly had a confidence to share, for his momentary hesitation was laden with import.

"I was also in the Perm government,

last year when the kulaks rebelled...I had just read Arnould's pamphlet, *Les morts de la Commune*—a fine pamphlet. So Milière was in my thoughts. And listen, Citizen, I avenged him myself! That was a wonderful day of my life—and there haven't been many, I can tell you. I avenged Milière perfectly. It was on the steps of the church that I shot the fattest capitalist of the place without compunction. I can't remember his name now, and I couldn't care less.'

"After a brief pause he added: 'But this time it was me who shouted "Long live humanity!"'"

Past revolts take on a new dimension in my present, the dimension of an immanent reality crying out to be brought into being. The walks of the Jardins du Luxembourg and the Square de la Tour St. Jacques still resound with gunfire and the cries of the Commune suppressed. There will be more gunfire, though, and more heaps of corpses. One day the revolutionaries of all time will be joined by the revolutionaries of the world and together they will cleanse the Mur des Fédérés with the blood of the executioners.

To construct the present is to rectify the past, to change the psychogeography of our surroundings, to hew our unfulfilled dreams and wishes out of the veinstone that imprisons them, to let individual passions find harmonious collective expression. The time gap which separates the insurgents of 1525 from the Mulelist rebels, Spartacus from Pancho Villa, or Lucretius from Lautréamont, can be bridged only by my will to live.

Waiting for joyous tomorrows is what kills our joys today. The future is worse than the ocean itself, for it contains *nothing*. Blueprints, plans, the long-term



CLIFF HARPER '81
Clifford Harper

view: castles in the air. A solidly constructed present is the only necessity—the rest will take care of itself.

Only the quick of the present, its multiplicity, is of interest to me. Despite all the strictures on it, I want to bathe in today as in a great light; to reduce other times and other's space to the immediacy of daily experience, I want to concretize Schwester Katrie's mystical formula: "Everything that is in me is in me; everything that is in me is outside me; everything that is in me is all around me; everything that is in me is mine; and nowhere can I see anything that is not in me." For this is no more than subjectivity's rightful triumph, a triumph which history has now put within our grasp. We have merely to tear down the Bastilles of the future, restructure the past and live each second as though an eternal return ensured its recurrence forever in an endless cycle.

Only the present can aspire to totality. It is a point of incredible density. We have to learn to slow time down, to live immediate experience as permanent passion. A tennis champion recalls how during a very tense match, when he had a very difficult and critical return to make, he suddenly saw everything in

slow motion; he thus had plenty of time to weigh up the situation, judge distances and make a brilliant return shot. The fact is that in the zone of true creation time dilates. In the realm of inauthenticity, by contrast, it accelerates. Whoever masters the poetics of the present may expect adventures comparable to that of the little Chinese boy who fell in love with the Queen of the Seas. He went searching for her in the depths of the ocean. When he returned to *terra firma* he came upon an old man pruning roses who said to him: "It is a strange

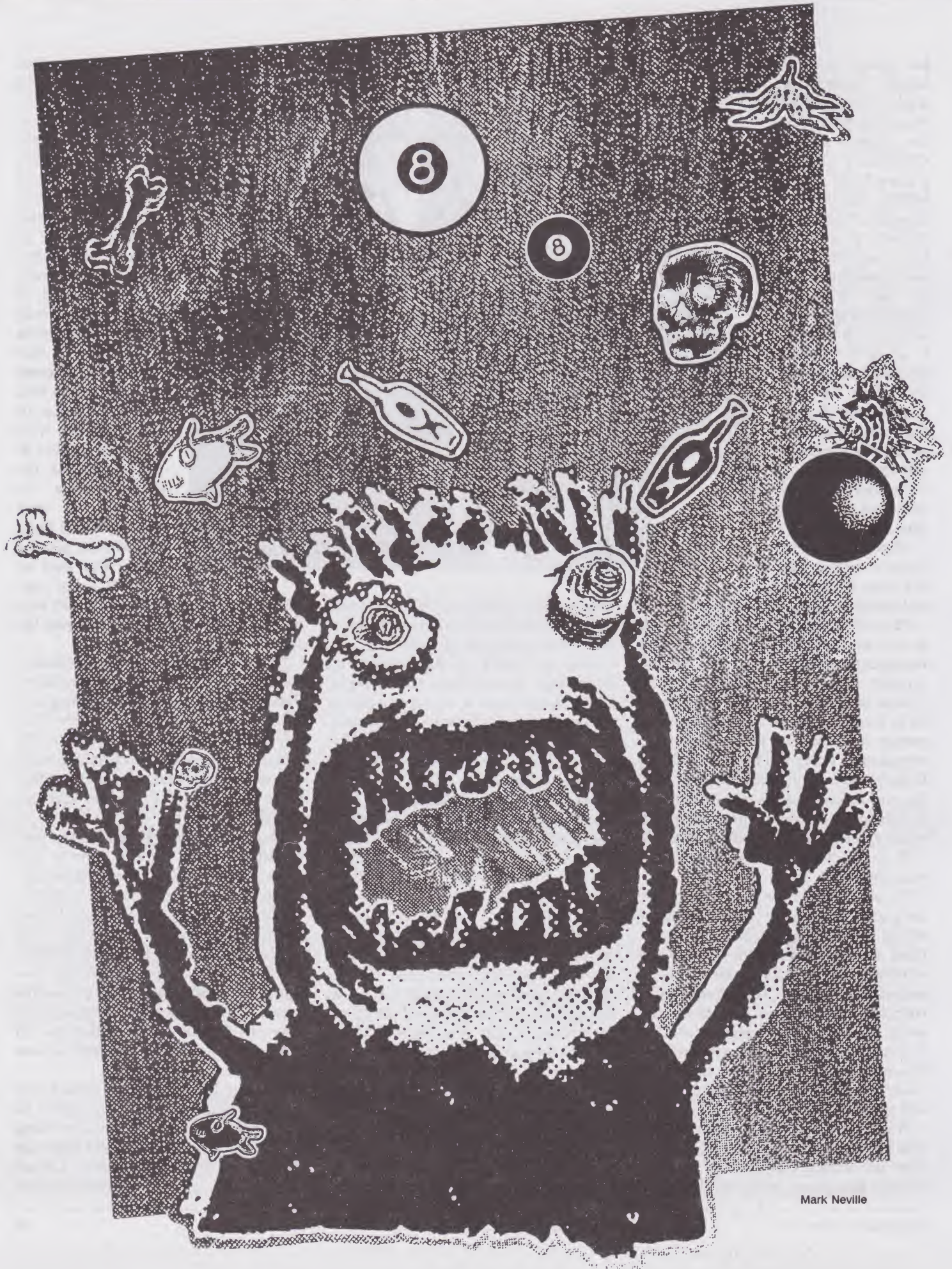
thing, but my grandfather told me of a little boy lost at sea who had just the same name as you."

"All time resides in the moment," according to the Esoteric tradition. Passed through history's developing tray, a statement in the *Pistis Sophia*—"One day of light is a thousand years in the history of the world"—translates word for word into Lenin's assertion that there are days of revolution that are worth centuries.

The task is always to resolve the contradictions of the present, never to stop halfway or let oneself be "distracted," but to head directly towards transcendence. This task is collective, passionate, poetic and playful (eternity is the world of play, according to Boehme). No matter how poor, the present always contains true wealth, the wealth of possible creation. This is the uninterrupted poem that can fill me with joy. But you all know—for you all live—everything that keeps it out of my grasp.

But can I let myself be sucked into the whirlpool of dead time, agree to grow old, to wear out slowly till nothing is left of my body and mind? Better to die in a way that defies duration. Citizen

Continued on page 35



Mark Neville

Running on Emptiness: THE FAILURE OF SYMBOLIC THOUGHT

John Zerzan

To what degree can it be said that we are really living?

As the substance of culture seems to shrivel and offer less balm to troubled lives, we are led to look more deeply at our barren times. And to the place of culture itself in all this.

An anguished Ted Sloan asks (1996), "What is the problem with modernity? Why do modern societies have such a hard time producing adults capable of intimacy, work, enjoyment, and ethical living? Why is it that signs of damaged life are so prevalent?" According to David Morris (1994), "Chronic pain and depression, often linked and occasionally even regarded as a single disorder, constitute an immense crisis at the center of postmodern life." We have cyberspace and virtual reality, instant computerized communication in the global village; and yet have we ever felt so impoverished and isolated?

Just as Freud predicted that the fullness of civilization would mean universal neurotic unhappiness, anti-civilization currents are growing in response to the psychic immiseration that envelops us. Thus symbolic life, essence of civilization, now comes under fire.

It may still be said that this most familiar, if artificial, element is the least understood, but felt necessity drives critique, and many of us feel driven to get to the bottom of a steadily worsening mode of existence. Out of a sense of being trapped and limited by symbols comes the thesis that the extent to which thought and emotion are tied to symbolism is the measure by which absence fills the inner world and destroys the outer world.

We seem to have experienced a fall into representation, whose depths and consequences are only now being fully plumbed. In a fundamental sort of falsification, symbols at first mediated reality and then replaced it. At present we live within symbols to a greater degree than we do within our bodily selves or directly with each other.

The more involved this internal representational system is, the more distanced we are from the reality around us. Other connections, other cognitive perspectives are inhibited, to say the least, as symbolic communication and its myriad representational devices have accomplished an alienation from and betrayal of reality.

This coming between and concomitant distortion and distancing is ideological in a primary and original sense; every subsequent ideology is an echo of this one. Debord depicted contemporary society as exerting a ban on living in favor of its representation: images now in the saddle, riding life. But this is anything but a new problem. There is an imperialism or

expansionism of culture from the beginning. And how much does it conquer? Philosophy today says that it is language that thinks and talks. But how much has this always been the case?

Symbolizing is linear, successive, substitutive; it cannot be open to its whole object simultaneously. Its instrumental reason is just that: manipulative and seeking dominance. Its approach is "let a stand for b" instead of "let a be a." Language has its basis in the effort to conceptualize and equalize the unequal, thus bypassing the essence and diversity of a varied, variable richness.

Symbolism is an extensive and profound empire, which reflects and makes coherent a world view, and is itself a world view based upon withdrawal from immediate and intelligible human meaning.

James Shreeve, at the end of his *Neanderthal Enigma* (1995), provides a beautiful illustration of an alternative to symbolic being. Meditating upon what an earlier, non-symbolic consciousness might have been like, he calls forth important distinctions and possibilities:

...where the modern's gods might inhabit the eland, the buffalo, or the blade of grass, the Neanderthal's spirit was the animal or the grass blade, the thing and its soul perceived as a single vital force, with no need to distinguish them with separate names. Similarly, the absence of artistic expression does not preclude the apprehension of what is artful about the world. Neanderthals did not paint their caves with the images of animals. But perhaps they had no need to distill life into representations, because its essences were already revealed to their senses. The sight of a running herd was enough to inspire a surging sense of beauty. They had no drums or bone flutes, but they could listen to the booming rhythms of the wind, the earth, and each other's heartbeats, and be transported."

Rather than celebrate the cognitive communion with the world that Shreeve suggests we once enjoyed, much less embark on the project of seeking to recover it, the use of symbols is of course widely considered the hallmark of human cognition. Goethe said, "Everything is a symbol," as industrial capitalism, milestone of mediation and alienation, took off. At about the same time Kant decided that the key to philosophy lies in the answer to the question, "What is the ground of the relation of that in us which we call 'representation' to the object?" Unfortunately, he divined for modern thought an ahistorical and fundamentally inadequate answer, namely that

we are simply not constituted so as to be able to understand reality directly. Two centuries later (1981), Emmanuel Levinas came much closer to the mark with "Philosophy, in its very diachrony, is the consciousness of the breakup of consciousness."

Eli Sagan (1985) spoke for countless others in declaring that the need to symbolize and live in a symbolic world is, like aggression, a human need so basic that "it can be denied only at the cost of severe psychic disorder." The need for symbols—and violence—did not always obtain, however. Rather, they have their origins in the thwarting and fragmenting of an earlier wholeness, in the process of domestication from which civilization issued. Apparently driven forward by a gradually quickening growth in the division of labor that began to take hold in the Upper Paleolithic, culture emerged as time, language, art, number, and then agriculture.

The word culture derives from the Latin *cultura*, referring to cultivation of the soil; that is, to the domestication of plants and animals—and of ourselves in the bargain. A restless spirit of innovation and anxiety has largely been with us ever since, as continually changing symbolic modes seek to fix what cannot be redressed without rejecting the symbolic and its estranged world.

Following Durkheim, Leslie White (1949) wrote, "Human behavior is symbolic behavior; symbolic behavior is human behavior. The symbol is the universe of humanity." It is past time to see such pronouncements as ideology, serving to shore up the elemental falsification underneath a virtually all-encompassing false consciousness. But if a fully developed symbolic world is not, in Northrop Frye's bald claim (1981), in sum "the charter of our freedom," anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1965) comes closer to the truth in saying that we are generally dependent on "the guidance provided by systems of significant symbols." Closer yet is Cohen (1974), who observed that "symbols are essential for the development and maintenance of social order." The ensemble of symbols represents the social order and the individual's place in it, a formulation that always leaves the genesis of this arrangement unquestioned. How did our behavior come to be aligned by symbolization?

Culture arose and flourished via domination of nature, its growth a measure of that progressive mastery that unfolded with ever greater division of labor. Malinowski (1962) understood symbolism as the soul of civilization, chiefly in the form of language as a means of coordinating action or of standardizing technique, and providing rules for social, ritual, and industrial behavior.

It is our fall from a simplicity and fullness of life directly

experienced, from the sensuous moment of knowing, which leaves a gap that the symbolic can never bridge. This is what is always being covered over by layers of cultural consolations, civilized detouring that never recovers lost wholeness. In a very deep sense, only what is repressed is symbolized, because only what is repressed needs to be symbolized. The magnitude of symbolization testifies to how much has been repressed; buried, but possibly still recoverable.

Imperceptibly for a long while, most likely, division of labor very slowly advanced and eventually began to erode the autonomy of the individual and a face-to-face mode of social existence. The virus destined to become full-blown as civilization began in this way: a tentative thesis supported by all that victimizes us now. From initial alienation to advanced civilization, the course is marked by more and more reification, dependence, bureaucratization, spiritual desolation, and barren technicization.

Little wonder that the question of the origin of symbolic thought, the very air of civilization, arises with some force. Why culture should exist in the first

place appears, increasingly, a more apt way to put it. Especially given the enormous antiquity of human intelligence now established, chiefly from Thomas Wynn's persuasive demonstration (1989) of what it took to fashion the stone tools of about a million years ago. There was a very evident gap between established human capability and the initiation of symbolic culture, with many thousands of generations intervening between the two.

Culture is a fairly recent affair. The oldest cave art, for example, is in the neighborhood of 30,000 years old, and agriculture only got underway about 10,000 years ago. The missing element during the vast interval between the time when I.Q. was available to enable symbolizing, and its realization, was a shift in our relationship to nature. It seems plausible to see in this interval, on some level that we will perhaps never fathom, a refusal to strive for mastery of nature. It may be that only when this striving for mastery was introduced, probably non-consciously, via a very gradual division of labor, did the symbolizing of experiences begin to take hold.

But, it is so often argued, the violence of primitives—human sacrifice, cannibalism, head-hunting, slavery, etc.—can only be tamed by symbolic culture/civilization. The simple answer to this stereotype of the primitive is that organized violence was not ended by culture, but in fact commenced with it. William J. Perry (1927) studied various New World peoples and noted a striking contrast between an agricultural group and a non-domesticated group. He found the latter "greatly inferior in culture, but lacking [the former's] hideous customs." While virtually every society that adopted a domesticated relationship

Just as Freud predicted that the fullness of civilization would mean universal neurotic unhappiness, anti-civilization currents are growing in response to the psychic immiseration that envelops us. Thus symbolic life, essence of civilization, now comes under fire.

to nature, all over the globe, became subject to violent practices, the non-agricultural knew no organized violence. Anthropologists have long focused on the Northwest Coast Indians as a rare exception to this rule of thumb. Although essentially a fishing people, at a certain point they took slaves and established a very hierarchical society. Even here, however, domestication was present, in the form of tame dogs and tobacco as a minor crop.

We succumb to objectification and let a web of culture control us and tell us how to live, as if this were a natural development. It is anything but that, and we should be clear about what culture/civilization has in fact given us, and what it has taken away.

The philosopher Richard Rorty (1979) described culture as the assemblage of claims to knowledge. In the realm of symbolic being the senses are depreciated, because of their systematic separation and atrophy under civilization. The sensual is not considered a legitimate source of claims to truth.

We humans once allowed a full and appreciative reception to the total sensory input, what is called in German *umwelt*, or the world around us. Heinz Werner (1940, 1963) argued that originally a single sense obtained, before divisions in society ruptured sensory unity. Surviving non-agricultural peoples often exhibit, in the interplay and interpenetration of the senses, a very much greater sensory awareness and involvement than do domesticated individuals (E. Carpenter 1980). Striking examples abound, such as the Bushmen, who can see four moons of Jupiter with the unaided eye and can hear a single-engine light plane seventy miles away (Farb 1978).

Symbolic culture inhibits human communication by blocking and otherwise suppressing channels of sensory awareness. An increasingly technological existence compels us to tune out most of what we could experience. The William Blake declaration comes to mind:

"If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite. For man has closed himself up, 'till he sees all things through narrow chinks of his cavern."

Laurens van der Post (1958) described telepathic communication among the Kung in Africa, prompting Richard Coan (1987) to characterize such modes as "representing an alternative, rather than a prelude to the kind of civilization in which we live."

In 1623 William Drummond wrote, "What sweet contentments doth the soul enjoy by the senses. They are the gates and windows of its knowledge, the organs of its delight." In fact, the "I," if not the "soul," doesn't exist in the absence of bodily sensations; there are no non-sensory conscious states.

But it is all too evident how our senses have been domesticated in a symbolic cultural atmosphere: tamed, separated,

arranged in a revealing hierarchy. Vision, under the sign of modern linear perspective, reigns because it is the least proximal, most distancing of the senses. It has been the means by which the individual has been transformed into a spectator, the world into a spectacle, and the body an object or specimen. The primacy of the visual is no accident, for an undue elevation of sight not only situates the viewer outside what he or she sees, but enables the principle of control or domination at base. Sound or hearing as the acme of the senses would be much less adequate to domestication because it surrounds and penetrates the speaker as well as the listener.

Other sensual faculties are discounted far more. Smell, which loses its importance only when suppressed by culture, was once a vital means of connection with the world. The literature on cognition almost completely ignores the sense of smell, just as its role is now so circumscribed among humans. It is, after all, of little use for purposes of domination; considering how smell can so directly trigger even very distant memories, perhaps it is even a kind of anti-domination faculty. Lewis Thomas (1983) remarked that "The act of smelling something, anything, is remarkably like the act of thinking itself." And if it isn't it very likely used to be and should be again.

Tactile experiences or practices are another sensual area we have been expected to relinquish in favor of compensatory symbolic substitutes. The sense of touch has indeed been diminished in a synthetic, work-occupied, long-distance existence. There is little time for or emphasis on tactile stimulation or communication, even though such deprivation causes clearly negative outcomes. Nuances of sensitivity and tenderness become lost, and it is well known that infants and children who are seldom touched, carried and caressed are slow to develop and are often emotionally stunted.

Touching by definition involves feeling; to be "touched" is to feel emotionally moved, a reminder of the earlier potency of the tactile sense, as in the expression "keep in touch." The lessening of this category of sensuousness, among the rest, has had momentous consequences. Its renewal, in a re-sensitized, reunited world, will bring a likewise momentous improvement in living. As Tommy cried out, in The Who's rock opera of the same name, "See me, feel me, touch me, heal me...."

As with animals and plants, the land, the rivers, and human emotions, the senses come to be isolated and subdued. Aristotle's notion of a "proper" plan of the universe dictated that "each sense has its proper sphere." Freud, Marcuse and others saw that civilization demands the sublimation or repression of the pleasures of the proximity senses so that the individual can be thus converted to an instrument of labor. Social control, via the network of the symbolic, very deliberately disempowers the body. An alienated counter-world, driven on to greater estrangement by ever-greater division of labor, humbles one's own somatic sensations and fundamental-



Clifford Harper

ly distracts from the basic rhythms of one's life.

The definitive mind-body split, ascribed to Descartes' 17th century formulations, is the very hallmark of modern society. What has been referred to as the great "Cartesian anxiety" over the specter of intellectual and moral chaos, was resolved in favor of suppression of the sensual and passionate dimension of human existence. Again we see the domesticating urge underlying culture, the fear of not being in control, now indicting the senses with a vengeance. Henceforth science and technology have a theoretic license to proceed without limits, sensual knowledge having been effectively eradicated in terms of claims to truth or understanding.

Seeing what this bargain has wrought, a deep-seated reaction is dawning against the vast symbolic enterprise that weighs us down and invades every part of us. "If we do not 'come to our senses' soon," as David Howes (1991) judged, "we will have permanently forfeited the chance of constructing any meaningful alternatives to the pseudo-existence which passes for life in our current 'Civilization of the Image.'" The task of critique may be, most centrally, to help us see what it will take to reach a place in which we are truly present to each other and to the world.

The first separation seems to have been the sense of time which brings a loss of being present to ourselves. The growth of this sense is all but indistinguishable from that of alienation itself. If, as Lévi-Strauss put it, "the characteristic feature of the savage mind is its timelessness," living in the here and now becomes lost through the mediation of cultural interventions. Presentness is deferred by the symbolic, and this refusal of the contingent instant is the birth of time. We fall under the spell of what Eliade called the "terror of history" as representations effectively oppose the pull of immediate perceptual experience.

Mircea Eliade's *Myth of the Eternal Return* (1954) stresses the fear that all primitive societies have had of history, the passing of time. On the other hand, voices of civilization have tried to celebrate our immersion in this most basic cultural construct. Leroi-Gourhan (1964), for instance, saw in time orientation "perhaps the human act par excellence." Our perceptions have become so time-governed and time saturated that it is hard to imagine time's general absence: for the same reasons it is so difficult to see, at this point, a non-alienated, non-symbolic, undivided social existence.

History, according to Peterson and Goodall (1993), is marked by an amnesia about where we came from. Their stimulating *Visions of Caliban* also pointed out that our great

forgetting may well have begun with language, the originating device of the symbolic world. Comparative linguist Mary LeCron Foster (1978, 1980) believes that language is perhaps less than 50,000 years old and arose with the first impulses toward art, ritual and social differentiation. Verbal symbolizing is the principal means of establishing, defining, and maintaining the cultural world and of structuring our very thinking.

As Hegel said somewhere, to question language is to question being. It is very important, however, to resist such overstatements and see the distinction, for one thing, between the cultural importance of language and its inherent limitations. To hold that we and the world are but linguistic creations is just another way of saying how pervasive and controlling is symbolic culture. But Hegel's claim goes much too far, and George Herbert Mead's assertion (1934) that to have a mind one must have a language is similarly hyperbolic and false.

Language transforms meaning and communication but is not synonymous with them. Thought, as Vendler (1967) understood, is essentially independent of language. Studies of patients and others lacking all aspects of speech and language demonstrate that the intellect remains powerful even in the absence of those elements (Lecours

and Joannette 1980; Donald 1991). The claim that language greatly facilitates thought is likewise questionable, inasmuch as formal experiments with children and adults have not demonstrated it (G. Cohen 1977). Language is clearly not a necessary condition for thinking (see Kertesz 1988, Jansons 1988).

Verbal communication is part of the movement away from a face-to-face social reality, making feasible physical separateness. The word always stands between people who wish to connect with each other, facilitating the diminution of what need not be spoken to be said. That we have declined from a non-linguistic state begins to appear a sane point of view. This intuition may lie behind George W. Morgan's 1968 judgment that "Nothing, indeed, is more subject to depreciation and suspicion in our disenchanted world than the word."

Communication outside civilization involved all the senses, a condition linked to the key gatherer-hunter traits of openness and sharing. Literacy ushered us into the society of divided and reduced senses, and we take this sensory deprivation for granted as if it were a natural state, just as we take literacy for granted.

Culture and technology exist because of language. Many have seen speech, in turn, as a means of coordinating labor, that is, as an essential part of the technique of production.

Debord depicted contemporary society as exerting a ban on living in favor of its representation: images now in the saddle, riding life. But this is anything but a new problem. There is an imperialism or expansionism of culture from the beginning. And how much does it conquer? Philosophy today says that it is language that thinks and talks. But how much has this always been the case?

Language is critical for the formation of the rules of work and exchange accompanying division of labor, with the specializations and standardizations of nascent economy paralleling those of language. Now guided by symbolization, a new kind of thinking takes over, which realizes itself in culture and technology. The interdependence of language and technology is at least as obvious as that of language and culture, and results in an accelerating mastery over the natural world intrinsically similar to the control introduced over the once autonomous and sensuous individual.

Noam Chomsky, chief language theorist, commits a grave and reactionary error by portraying language as a "natural" aspect of "essential human nature," innate and independent of culture (1966b, 1992). His Cartesian perspective sees the mind as an abstract machine which is simply destined to turn out strings of symbols and manipulate them. Concepts like origins or alienation have no place in this barren techno-schema. Lieberman (1975) provides a concise and fundamental correction: "Human language could have evolved only in relation to the total human condition."

The original sense of the word define is, from Latin, to limit or bring to an end. Language seems often to close an experience, not to help ourselves be open to experience. When we dream, what happens is not expressed in words, just as those in love communicate most deeply without verbal symbolizing. What has been advanced by language that has really advanced the human spirit? In 1976, von Glasersfeld wondered "whether, at some future time, it will still seem so obvious that language has enhanced the survival of life on this planet."

Numerical symbolism is also of fundamental importance to the development of a cultural world. In many primitive societies it was and is considered unlucky to count living creatures, an anti-reification attitude related to the common primitive notion that to name another is to gain power over that person. Counting, like naming, is part of the domestication process. Division of labor lends itself to the quantifiable, as opposed to what is whole in itself, unique, not fragmented. Number is also necessary for the abstraction inherent in the exchange of commodities and is prerequisite to the take-off of science and technology. The urge to measure involves a deformed kind of knowledge that seeks control of its object, not understanding.

The sentiment that "the only way we truly apprehend things is through art" is a commonplace opinion, one which under-

lines our dependence on symbols and representation. "The fact that originally all art was 'sacred'" (Eliade, 1985), that is, belonging to a separate sphere, testifies to its original status or function.

Art is among the earliest forms of ideological and ritual expressiveness, developed along with religious observances designed to hold together a communal life that was beginning to fragment. It was a key means of facilitating social integration and economic differentiation (Dickson, 1990), probably by encoding information to register membership, status, and position (Lumsden and Wilson 1983). Prior to this time, somewhere during the Upper Paleolithic, devices for social cohesion were unnecessary; division of labor, separate roles, and territoriality seem to have been largely non-existent. As tensions and anxieties started to emerge in social life, art and the rest of culture arose with them in answer to their disturbing presence.

Art, like religion, arose from the original sense of disquiet, no doubt subtly but powerfully disturbing in its newness and its encroaching gradualness. In 1900 Hirn wrote of an early dissatisfaction that motivated the artistic search for a "fuller and deeper expression" as "compensation for new deficiencies of

life." Cultural solutions, however, do not address the deeper dislocations that cultural "solutions" are themselves part of. Conversely, as commentators as diverse as Henry Miller and Theodor Adorno have concluded, there would be no need of art in a disalienated world. What art has ineffectively striven to capture and express would once again be a reality, the false antidote of culture forgotten.

Art is a language and so, evidently, is ritual, among the earliest cultural and symbolic institutions. Julia Kristeva (1989) commented on "the close relation of grammar to ritual," and Frits Staal's studies of Vedic ritual (1982 1986, 1988) demonstrated to him that syntax can completely explain the form and meaning of ritual. As Chris Knight (1996) noted, speech and ritual are "interdependent aspects of one and the same symbolic domain."

Essential for the breakthrough of the cultural in human affairs, ritual is not only a means of aligning or prescribing emotions; it is also a formalization that is intimately linked with hierarchies and formal rule over individuals. All known tribal societies and early civilizations had hierarchical organizations built on or bound up with a ritual structure and matching conceptual system.

Examples of the link between ritual and inequality, develop-

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ing even prior to agriculture, are widespread (Gans 1985, Conkey 1984). Rites serve a safety valve function for the discharge of tensions generated by emerging divisions in society and work to create and maintain social cohesion. Earlier on there was no need of devices to unify what was, in a non-division of labor context, still whole and unstratified.

It has often been said that the function of the symbol is to disclose structures of the real that are inaccessible to empirical observation. More to the point, in terms of the processes of culture and civilization, however, is Abner Cohen's contention (1981, 1993) that symbolism and ritual disguise, mystify and sanctify irksome duties and roles and thus make them seem desirable. Or, as David Parkin (1992) put it, the compulsory nature of ritual blunts the natural autonomy of individuals by placing them at the service of authority.

Ostensibly opposed to estrangement, the counter-world of public rites is arrayed against the current of historical direction. But, again, this is a delusion, since ritual facilitates the establishment of the cultural order, bedrock of alienated theory and practice. Ritual authority structures play an important part in the organization of production (division of labor) and actively further the coming of domestication. Symbolic categories are set up to control the wild and alien; thus the domination of women proceeds, a development brought to full realization with agriculture, when women become essentially beasts of burden and/or sexual objects. Part of this fundamental shift is movement toward territorialism and warfare; Johnson and Earle (1987) discussed the correspondence between this movement and the increased importance of ceremonialism.

According to James Shreeve (1995), "In the ethnographic record, wherever you get inequality, it is justified by invoking the sacred." Relatedly, all symbolism, says Eliade (1985), was originally religious symbolism. Social inequality seems to be accompanied by subjugation in the non-human sphere. M. Reinach (quoted in Radin, 1927) said, "thanks to magic, man takes the offensive against the objective world." Cassirer (1955) phrased it this way: "Nature yields nothing without ceremonies."

Out of ritual action arose the shaman, who was not only the first specialist because of his or her role in this area, but the first cultural practitioner in general. The earliest art was

accomplished by shamans, as they assumed ideological leadership and designed the content of rituals.

This original specialist became the regulator of group emotions, and as the shaman's potency increased, there was a corresponding decrease in the psychic vitality of the rest of the group (Lommel, 1967). Centralized authority, and most likely religion too, grew out of the elevated position of the shaman. The specter of social complexity was incarnated in this individual who wielded symbolic power. Every head man and chief developed from the primacy of this figure in the lives of others in the group.

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Religion, like art, contributed to a common symbolic grammar needed by the new social order and its fissures and anxieties. The word is based on the Latin *religare*, to tie or bind, and a Greek verbal stem denoting attentiveness to ritual, faithfulness to rules. Social integration, required for the first time, is evident as impetus to religion.

It is the answer to insecurities and tensions, promising resolution and transcendence by means of the symbolic. Religion finds no basis for its existence prior to the wrong turn taken toward culture and the civilized (domesticated). The American philosopher George Santayana summed it up well with, "Another world to live in is what we mean by religion."

Since Darwin's *Descent of Man* (1871) we have understood that human evolution greatly accelerated

culturally at a time of insignificant physiological change. Thus symbolic being did not depend on waiting for the right gifts to evolve. We can now see, with Clive Gamble (1994), that intention in human action did not arrive with domestication/agriculture/civilization.

The native denizens of Africa's Kalahari Desert, as studied by Laurens van der Post (1976), lived in "a state of complete trust, dependence and interdependence with nature," which was "far kinder to them than any civilization ever was." Egalitarianism and sharing were the hallmark qualities of hunter-gatherer life (G. Isaac 1976, Ingold 1987, 1988, Erdal and Whiten 1992, etc.), which is more accurately called gatherer-hunter life, or the foraging mode. In fact, the great bulk of this diet consisted of plant material, and there is no conclusive evidence for hunting at all prior to the Upper Paleolithic (Binford 1984, 1985).

An instructive look at contemporary primitive societies is

Colin Turnbull's work (1961, 1965) on pygmies of the Ituri forest and their Bantu neighbors. The pygmies are foragers, living with no religion or culture. They are seen as immoral and ignorant by the agriculturalist Bantu, but enjoy much greater individualism and freedom. To the annoyance of the Bantu, the pygmies irreverently mock the solemn rites of the latter and their sense of sin. Rejecting territorialism, much less private holdings, they "move freely in an uncharted, unsystematized, unbounded social world," according to Mary Douglas (1973).

The vast era prior to the coming of symbolic being is an enormously prominent reality and a question mark to some. Commenting on this "period spanning more than a million years," Tim Ingold (1993) called it "one of the most profound enigmas known to archaeological science." But the longevity of this stable, non-cultural epoch has a simple explanation: as F. Goodman (1988) surmised, "It was such a harmonious existence, and such a successful adaptation, that it did not materially alter for many thousands of years."

Culture triumphed at last with domestication. The scope of life became narrower, more specialized, forcibly divorced from its previous grace and spontaneous liberty. The assault of a symbolic orientation upon the natural also had immediate outward results. Early rock drawings, found 125 miles from the nearest recorded trickle of water in the Sahara, show people swimming. Elephants were still somewhat common in some coastal Mediterranean zones in 500 B.C., wrote Herodotus. Historian Clive Ponting (1992) has shown that every civilization has diminished the health of its environment.

And cultivation definitely did not provide a higher-quality or more reliable food base (M.N. Cohen 1989, Walker and Shipman 1996), though it did introduce diseases of all kinds, almost completely unknown outside civilization (Burkett 1978, Freund 1982), and sexual inequality (M. Ehrenberg 1989b, A. Getty 1996). Frank Waters' *Book of the Hopi* (1963) gives us a stunning picture of unchecked division of labor and the poverty of the symbolic: "More and more they traded for things they didn't need, and the more goods they got, the more they wanted. This was very serious. For they did not realize they were drawing away, step by step, from the good life given them."

A pertinent chapter from *The Time Before History* (1996) by Colin Tudge bears a title that speaks volumes, "The End of Eden: Farming." Much of an underlying epistemological distinction is revealed in this contrast by Ingold (1993): "In short, whereas for farmers and herdsmen the tool is an instrument of control, for hunters and gatherers it would better be regarded as an instrument of revelation." And Horkheimer (1972) bears quoting, in terms of the psychic cost of domestication/domination of nature: "the destruction of the inner life is the penalty man has to pay for having no respect for any life other than his own." Violence directed outward is at the same time inflicted spiritually, and the outside world becomes transformed, debased, as surely as the perceptual field was subjected to fundamental redefinition. Nature certainly did not ordain civilization; quite the contrary.

Today it is fashionable, if not mandatory, to maintain that culture always was and always will be. Even though it is demonstrably the case that there was an extremely long non-

symbolic human era, perhaps one hundred times as long as that of civilization, and that culture has gained only at the expense of nature, one has it from all sides that the symbolic—like alienation—is eternal. Thus questions of origins and destinations are meaningless. Nothing can be traced further than the semiotic in which everything is trapped.

But the limits of the dominant rationality and the costs of civilization are too starkly visible for us to accept this kind of cop-out. Since the ascendance of the symbolic humans have been trying, through participation in culture, to recover an authenticity we once lived. The constant urge or quest for the transcendent testifies that the hegemony of absence is a cultural constant. As Thomas McFarland (1987) found, "culture primarily witnesses the absence of meaning, not its presence."

Massive, unfulfilling consumption, within the dictates of production and social control, reigns as the chief everyday consolation for this absence of meaning, and culture is certainly itself a prime consumer choice. At base, it is division of labor that ordains our false and disabling symbolic totality. "The increase in specialization..." wrote Peter Lomas (1996), "undermines our confidence in our ordinary capacity to live."

We are caught in the cultural logic of objectification and the objectifying logic of culture, such that those who counsel new ritual and other representational forms as the route to a re-enchanted existence miss the point completely. More of what has failed for so long can hardly be the answer. Lévi-Strauss (1978) referred to "a kind of wisdom [that primitive peoples] practiced spontaneously and the rejection of which, by the modern world, is the real madness."

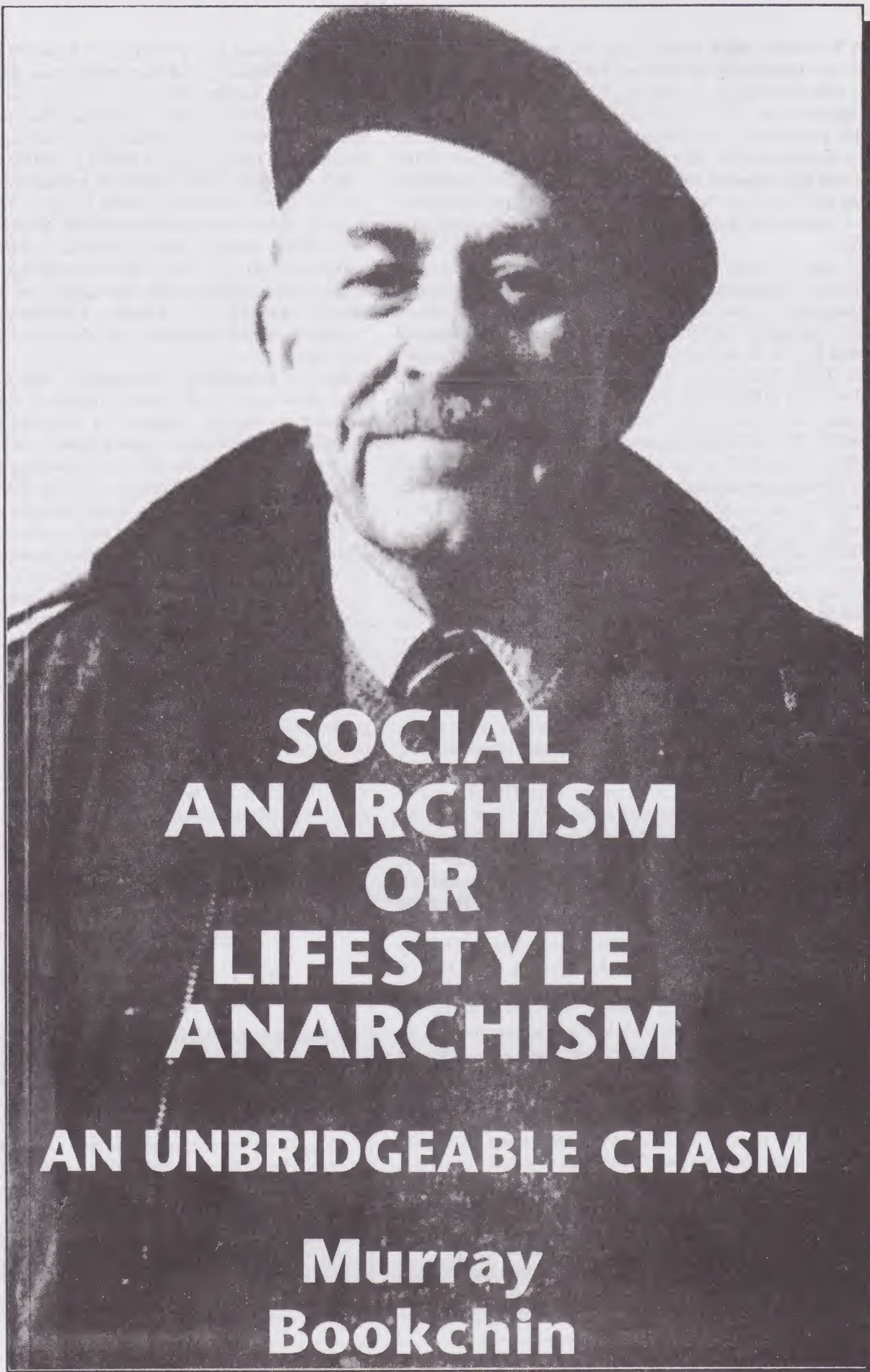
Either the non-symbolizing health that once obtained, in all its dimensions, or madness and death. Culture has led us to betray our own aboriginal spirit and wholeness, into an ever-worsening realm of synthetic, isolating, impoverished estrangement. Which is not to say that there are no more everyday pleasures, without which we would lose our humanness. But as our plight deepens, we glimpse how much must be erased for our redemption.

The Space-Time of Lived Experience

continued from page 27

Anquetil, in his *Précis de l'Histoire Universelle*, published in Paris in Year VII of the Republic, tells the story of a Persian Prince who was so offended by the world's vanity that he withdrew to a castle along with forty of the most beautiful and literate courtesans of the kingdom. There he died a month later from the excesses of debauchery. What is death compared to such an infinity? If I must die, at least let me die as I have occasionally loved.

Copies of Raoul Vaneigem's *Revolution of Everyday Life* are still available from C.A.L. Press, POB 1446, Columbia, MO 65205-1446, for U.S.\$16.00 postpaid. (For Priority Mail add \$4.00.)



**SOCIAL
ANARCHISM
OR
LIFESTYLE
ANARCHISM**

AN UNBRIDGEABLE CHASM

**Murray
Bookchin**

Murray Bookchin, GRUMPY OLD MAN

Bob Black

"Murray Bookchin, *Grumpy Old Man*" is the first chapter of Bob Black's trenchant new book *Anarchy after Leftism*, just published by the new C.A.L. Press/Paleo Editions book project. Those who know and love (or hate) him, can expect more of Bob's witty and highly entertaining writing in this no-holds-barred encounter with the grand ideas of the Dean of Social Ecology. The book is available by mail directly from the publisher (you might have trouble locating it in bookstores since some distributors are refusing to handle it!). Send a check for \$7.95 plus \$2.05 shipping & handling (for a total of \$10.00) made out to C.A.L. Press to: AAA, POB 11331, Eugene, OR 97440, U.S.A. Bulk discounts are available.

Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism may well be the worst book about anarchists that any of them has ever written.

According to the cover blurb, Murray Bookchin, born in 1921, has been "a lifelong radical since the early 1930s." "Radical" is here a euphemism for "Stalinist"; Bookchin was originally "a militant in the Young Pioneers and the Young Communist League" (Clark 1990: 102; cf. Bookchin 1977: 3). Later he became a Trotskyist. At one time Bookchin himself, "as one who participated actively in the 'radical' movements of the thirties" (Bookchin 1970: 56), put the word "radical," considering the context, in quotation marks, but now he is nostalgic about that milieu, what he calls the Left That Was (Bookchin 1996: 66-86).

About 25 years ago, Murray Bookchin peered into the mirror and mistook it for a window of opportunity. In 1963 he wrote, under a pseudonym, *Our Synthetic Society* (Herber 1963), which anticipated (although it seems not to have influenced) the environmentalist movement. In 1970, by which time he was pushing 50 and calling himself an anarchist, Bookchin wrote "Listen, Marxist!"—a moderately effective anti-authoritarian polemic against such Marxist myths as the revolutionary vanguard organization and the proletariat as revolutionary subject (Bookchin 1971: 171-222). In this and in other essays collected in *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* (1971), Bookchin disdained to conceal his delight with the disarray of his Marxist comrades-turned-competitors. He thought he saw his chance. Under his tutelage, anarchism would finally displace Marxism, and Bookchin would place the stamp of his specialty, "social ecology," on anarchism. Not only would he

be betting on the winning horse, he would be the jockey. As one of his followers has written, "if your efforts at creating your own mass movement have been pathetic failures, find someone else's movement and try to lead it" (Clark 1984: 108).

Bookchin thereupon set out to conquer the anarchists for the eco-radicals (the Greens), the Greens for the anarchists, and all for one—the great one—Murray Bookchin himself. He would supply the "muscularity of thought" (Bookchin 1987b: 3) that they lacked. By now he's been "a prophetic voice in the ecology movement for more than thirty years," if he does say so himself (Institute for Social Ecology 1996: 13) (Bookchin co-founded the ISE). He cranked out several well-padded, largely repetitious books. *The Ecology of Freedom* (1982; rev. ed. 1991) is the one he apparently regards as his magnum opus. At any rate, one of his jacket blurbs (Bookchin 1987a) quotes a revolutionary anarchist weekly, the *Village Voice*, to that effect (cf. Clark [1984]: 215).

The material base for these superstructural effusions was Bookchin's providential appointment as a Dean at Goddard College near Burlington, Vermont, a cuddle-college for hippies and, more recently, punks, with wealthy parents (cf. Goddard College 1995). He also held an appointment at Ramapo College. Bookchin, who sneers at leftists who have embarked upon "alluring university careers" (1996: 67), is one of them.

Something went awry. Although Dean Bookchin was indeed widely read by North American anarchists—one of his acknowledged sycophants (Clark 1984: 11) calls him "the foremost contemporary anarchist theorist" (Clark 1990: 102; cf. Clark 1982: 59)—in fact, not many anarchists acknowledged him as *their* dean. They appreciated his ecological orientation, to be sure, but some drew their own, more far-reaching conclusions from it. The Dean came up against an unexpected obstacle. The master-plan called for anarchists to increase in numbers and to read his books, and those parts came off tolerably well. It was okay if they also read a few anarchist classics, Bakunin and Kropotkin for instance (1996: 8), vetted by the Dean, with the understanding that even the best of them afford "mere glimpses" of the forms of a free society (Bookchin 1971: 79) subsequently built upon, but transcended by, the Dean's own epochal discovery, social ecology/social anarchism. Bookchin does not mind standing on the shoulders of giants—he rather enjoys the feel of them under his heel—so long as he stands tallest of all.

He must have had no doubt that he would. He seemed to have no competition intramurally. Paul Goodman, "the most

What [Murray Bookchin] did not expect was that anarchists would start reading outside his curriculum and, worse yet, occasionally *think for themselves*, something that—in all fairness—nobody could have anticipated. They read, for instance, about the ethnography of the only societies—certain of the so-called primitive societies—which have actually been operative anarchist societies on a long-term basis. They also read about plebeian movements, communities, and insurrections—Adamites, Ranters, Diggers, Luddites, Shaysites, Enrages, Carbonari, even pirates (to mention, to be brief, only Euro-American, and only a few Euro-American examples)—seemingly outside of the Marxist-Bookchinist progressive schema. They scoped out Dada and Surrealism. They read the Situationists and the pro-situs. And, yes, like earlier generations of anarchists, they were receptive to currents of cultural radicalism...Who sent them down this twisted path?

widely known anarchist" (De Leon 1978: 132), untimely died. Tweedy British and Canadian anarchist intellectuals like Herbert Read, Alex Comfort and George Woodcock shuffled off into the literary world. Aging class-struggle fundamentalists like Sam Dolgoff and Albert Meltzer could be counted on to just keep doing what they were doing, whatever that was, and with their usual success. "We all stand on the shoulders of others," as the Dean generously allows (1982: Acknowledgements). Dean Bookchin could stand on the shoulders of midgets too. The footing was even surer there.

What the Dean did not expect was that anarchists would start reading outside his curriculum and, worse yet, occasionally *think for themselves*, something that—in all fairness—nobody could have anticipated. They read, for instance, about the ethnography of the only societies—certain of the so-called primitive societies—which have actually been operative anarchist societies on a long-term basis. They also read about plebeian movements, communities, and insurrections—Adamites, Ranters, Diggers, Luddites, Shaysites, Enrages, Carbonari, even pirates (to mention, to be brief, only Euro-American, and only a few Euro-American examples)—seemingly outside of the Marxist-Bookchinist progressive schema. They scoped out Dada and Surrealism. They read the Situationists and the pro-situs. And, yes, like earlier generations of anarchists, they were receptive to currents of cultural radicalism. Indeed, instead of listening to "decent music" (1996: 64 n. 37), they often preferred punk rock to Pete Seeger and Utah Phillips ("the folk song," he has explained, "constitutes the emotional, aesthetic, and spiritual expression of a people" [Bookchin 1996: 19]). And usually their hair was either too long or too short. Who sent them down this twisted path?

In some cases it was the "self-styled anarchist" (1996: 1, 2, 9)—this is a favorite Bookchin slur—who wrote:

The graffiti on the walls of Paris—"Power to the Imagination," "It is forbidden to forbid," "Life without dead times" [sic], "Never work"—represent a more probing analysis of these sources [of revolutionary unrest in modern society] than all the theoretical tomes inherited from the past. The uprising revealed that we are at the end of an old era and well into the beginning of a new one. The motive forces of revolution today, at least in the industrialized world, are not simply scarcity and material need, but also *the quality of everyday life, the demand for the liberation of experience, the attempt to gain control over one's destiny* [emphasis in the original].

This was not a solemn revolt, a *coup d'état* bureaucratically plotted and manipulated by a "vanguard" party; it was witty, satirical, inventive and creative—and therein lay its strength, its capacity for immense self-mobilization, its infectiousness.

The lumpen-bohemian crazy who penned this paean to "neo-Situationist 'ecstasy'" (1996: 26) is the prelapsarian Murray Bookchin (1971: 249-250, 251). These are all, in fact, situationist slogans. Some of us believed him then. Now he tells us we were wrong, although he never tells us *he* ever was. Why should we believe him now?

The Hard Right Republicans like Newt Gingrich along with the Neo-Conservative intellectuals (most of the latter, like the Dean, being high-income, elderly Jewish ex-Marxists from New York City who ended up as journalists and/or academics) blame the decline of Western civilization on the '60s. Bookchin can't credibly do that, since it was in the '60s that he came out as an anarchist, and built up the beginnings of his reputation as a theorist. In his golden years, he has to tread very carefully on this dark and bloody ground:

For all its shortcomings, the anarchic counterculture during the early part of the hectic 1960s was often intensely political and cast expressions like desire and ecstasy in eminently social terms, often deriding the personalistic tendencies of the later Woodstock generation (1996: 9).

By definition "the early part of the hectic 1960s" is presumably the years 1960-1964. This is the first time I've heard tell of an "anarchic counterculture" during the Kennedy Administration. As manifested in—what? the Peace Corps? the Green Berets? And while there were personalistic tendencies in the early 1960s, no one then anticipated, and so no one derided, the specific "personalistic tendencies of the later Woodstock generation." Not Bookchin, certainly, who concluded prematurely that "Marxian predictions that Youth Culture would fade into a comfortable accommodation with the system have proven to be false" (1970: 60).

What did the all-seeing Dean do to combat these nefarious trends in the 20-odd years they have been infecting anarchism? Nothing. He had better things to do than come to the rescue of the anarchist ideology he considers the last best hope of humankind. On the one hand, he was consolidating his alluring academic career; on the other, he was making a play for ideological hegemony over the Green movement. Were we all supposed to wait up for him?

There were those who actually tried to implement the Dean's directive to formulate "a coherent program" and "a revolutionary organization to provide a direction for the mass discontent that contemporary society is creating" (1). Note that Bookchin demands *one* organization, although he does not say if he wants an American CNT, an American FAI, or an American symbiote of both such as formed in Spain, with less than entirely positive consequences (Bookchin 1994: 20-25; cf. Brademas 1953).

During the recent decades of decadence, there were several opportunities for the Dean to participate in this important work. He claims that his parents were Wobblies (1996: 2-3)—I wonder what they thought when he became a Communist?—but he did not himself join the Industrial Workers of the World although it still, after a fashion, exists. In the late 1970s, some class-struggle anarchists formed the Anarchist Communist Federation, which collapsed in acrimony after a few years. The Dean did not join. One ACF faction set up the syndicalist Workers Solidarity Alliance; Bookchin didn't join that one either. And finally, in the last few years the direct-actionist newspaper *Love & Rage* has tried to turn its support groups into the nuclei of a national anarchist organization. Once again, Bookchin held himself aloof.

Why? No doubt all these organizations fell somewhat short

of his requirements, but as my mother says, "what do you want, an egg in your beer?" The CNT and the FAI were also imperfect. Everything is imperfect. If your fundamental critique of contemporary North American anarchists is that they have failed to assemble in a continental federation, surely you should have told them what is to be done, and how, a long time ago. The involvement of so distinguished a militant as Bookchin might energize an organization which might otherwise appear to be a sect of squabbling, droning dullards, perhaps because, in each and every instance, it is a sect of squabbling, droning dullards.

The only possible justification is that—to do justice to the Dean (and do I ever want to do exactly that!)—he laid down two requirements, not just one. A directive organization, yes—but with "a coherent program." Such time as remained after the performance of his administrative and academic responsibilities (and the lecture circuit) the Dean has devoted to providing the coherent program. No doubt Bookchin can organize the masses (he must have had a lot of practice, and surely great success, in his Marxist-Leninist days). So can many other comrades—but no other comrade can concoct a coherent program the way Bookchin can. It is, therefore, only rational for a division of labor to prevail. Less talented comrades should do the organizational drudge-work, freeing up Dean Bookchin—after hours—to theorize. It's an example of what capitalist economists call the Law of Comparative Advantage. All of that Kropotkinist-Bookchinist talk about rotation of tasks, about superseding the separation of hand-work and brain-work—time enough for that *after* the Revolution.

The Dean's booklet thunders (in a querulous sort of a way) that "anarchism stands at a turning point in its long and turbulent history" (1). When didn't it? In the time-honored sophist manner, the Dean offers an answer to a nonsense question of his own concoction. "At a time when popular distrust of the state has reached extraordinary proportions in many countries," etc., etc., "the failure of anarchists—or, at least, many self-styled anarchists—to reach a potentially huge body of supporters" is due, not entirely of course, but "in no small measure to the changes that have occurred in many anarchists over the past two decades . . . [they] have slowly surrendered the social core of anarchist ideas to the all-pervasive Yuppie and New Age personalism that marks this decadent, bourgeoisified era" (1996: 1).

Now this is a curious claim. Anarchism is unpopular, not because it opposes popular ideological fashions, but because it embraces them? It's unpopular because it's popular? This isn't the first time I've identified this obvious idiocy (Black & Gunderloy 1992).

Simple logic aside (where Dean Bookchin cast it), the Dean's empirical assumptions are ridiculous. North American anarchism is not "in retreat" (1996: 59), it has grown dramatically in the last twenty years. The Dean might have even had a little to do with that. It is *leftism* which is in retreat. That this growth of anarchism has coincided with the eclipse of orthodox anarcho-leftism by more interesting varieties of anarchy doesn't conclusively prove that the heterodox anarchies are the growth sector, but it sure looks that way. For instance, the North American anarchist publication with the

highest circulation, *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed*, is on Bookchin's enemies list (1996: 39, 50).

As for the supposition that "Yuppie and New Age personalism" are "all-pervasive" in our "decadent, bourgeoisified era," this says more about Dean Bookchin and the company he keeps than it does about contemporary society. If you are an upper middle class academic in an affluent leftist enclave like Burlington or Berkeley, you might well think so, but to generalize those impressions to the general society is unwarranted and narcissistic ("personalistic," as it were). America (or Canada) is still much more like Main Street than Marin County. If the Dean really thinks the brat-pack collegians in his Burlington ashram are representative North American youth, he doesn't get out enough.

Berating "Yuppies" for their self-indulgence, something Bookchin carries to the point of obsession (1 & *passim*), doesn't defy media-managed popular opinion, it *panders* to it. As is typical of progressives, Bookchin is behind the times. Not only are the '60s over, as he has finally figured out, so are the '70s and the '80s. The Old Left that he nostalgically recalls, what he calls the Left That Was (1996: 66-86), extolled discipline, sacrifice, hard work, monogamy, technological progress, heterosexuality, moralism, a sober and orderly if not downright puritanical lifestyle, and the subordination of the personal ("selfishness") to the interest of the cause and the group (be it the party, the union or the affinity group):

The puritanism and work ethic of the traditional left stem from one of the most powerful forces opposing revolution today—the capacity of the bourgeois environment to infiltrate the revolutionary framework. The origins of this power lie in the commodity nature of man under capitalism, a quality that is almost automatically translated to the organized group—and which the group, in turn, reinforces in its members.

This passage might have been written by Jacques Camatte, whose essay "On Organization" has exerted an anti-organizational influence on a lot of us "lifestyle anarchists" (Camatte 1995: 19-32). By now the reader will be on to my game (one of them, anyway): the above-quoted author is once again Bookchin the Younger (1971: 47; cf. Bookchin 1977: ch. 11). Again:

In its demands for tribalism, free sexuality, community, mutual aid, ecstatic experience, and a balanced ecology, the Youth Culture prefigures, however inchoately, a joyous communist and classless society, freed of the trammels of hierarchy and domination, a society that would transcend the historic splits between town and country, individual and society, and mind and body (Bookchin 1970: 59).

Bookchin the Elder's values, in contrast, are precisely those of the New Right and the neo-conservatives who have set the country's current political and ideological agendas—not the New Age bubbleheads Bookchin may meet in Vermont's socialist Congressman Bernie Saunders' hot tub.

"Yuppie" is, on the Dean's lips, an ill-chosen epithet. It is (lest we forget) a neologism and semi-acronym for "young

urban professional." To which aspects of this conjuncture does Dean Bookchin object? To urbanism? Bookchin is the apostle of urbanism (1987a): he thinks that "some kind of urban community is not only the environment of humanity: it is its destiny" (1974: 2). To professionalism? A college professor/bureaucrat such as Bookchin is a professional. The high technology Bookchin counts on to usher in post-scarcity anarchism (1971: 83-135; 1989: 196) is the invention of professionals and the fever-dream of techno-yuppies. So if Dean Bookchin, an *old* urban professional, disparages young urban professionals, what is it about them that he hates so much? By a process of elimination, it cannot be that they are urban and it cannot be that they are professional. It must be that they are *young*, as the Dean is not. Actually, a lot of them aren't all that young—most are baby boomers entering middle age—but to a Grumpy Old Man of 75 like Dean Bookchin, that's young enough to resent. But it's not their fault, after all, that most of them will live on long after Murray Bookchin is dead and forgotten.

And one more thing: Now that we know why the heretical anarchists have "failed to reach a potentially huge body of supporters," what's *his* excuse? One of his editors calls him "arguably the most prolific anarchist writer" (Ehrlich 1996: 384). (Although he has yet to outproduce the late Paul Goodman, who "produced a stream of books containing some of his enormous output of articles and speeches" [Walter 1972: 157] and he is likely to be soon surpassed by Hakim Bey—a far better writer—which may account for some of the insensate hatred the Dean displays for Bey.) So the truth is out there. Where, after all these years, are the Bookchinist masses?

The Dean's vocabulary of abuse evokes what he calls the Left That Was (1996: 66) but hardly the fondness he feels for it. His epithets for unorthodox anarchists are the standard Stalinist epithets for all anarchists. He berates anarchist "decadence" over and over, to which he often appends abstract denunciations of "bourgeois" or "petty bourgeois" tendencies. "Decadence" is an epithet so indiscriminately applied that a spirited case has been made for retiring it from responsible discourse (Gilman 1975). Even without going quite so far, undeniably "'decadent' as a term of political and social abuse has a generous range of applications," especially as deployed by Marxists and Fascists (Adams 1983: 1).

To speak of the Dean's denunciations of *le bourgeois* as "abstract" is my characteristically courteous way of hinting that he of all people had better pick his words more carefully. I say "abstract" because a college dean is a member of the bourgeoisie if, in any objective sense, anybody is. Bookchin surely has a higher income than anybody he's targeted. Dean Bookchin has to be deploying the word in a subjective, moralistic, judgmental sense which, however, he isn't defining.

It never used to bother the Dean that "many militant radicals tend to come from the relatively affluent strata" (Bookchin 1971: 25)—as his student disciples still do. Who else can afford to sit at his feet? For 1996-1997, the two-semester masters' program in Social Ecology costs \$10,578 (Goddard College 1996). Back then he considered it a "historic breach" that it was "relatively affluent middle class white youth" who created the implicitly revolutionary Youth

Culture (Bookchin 1970: 54-55).

No one can possibly pronounce with any confidence upon the class position of present-day North American anarchists in general, much less the class positions of "individualists," Bookchinists, etc. (Although my impression is that most anarcho-syndicalists are campus-based and none of them are factory workers. Work is much easier to glorify than it is to perform.) Nor does it bother the Dean that almost the only luminaries unconditionally admitted to his anarchist pantheon, Bakunin and Kropotkin, were hereditary aristocrats. Class-baiting is evidently a weapon to be deployed with fine discrimination.

For Bookchin, as for Stalinists, class is not a category of analysis, only an argot of abuse. Long ago he dismissed "workeritis" as "reactionary to the core," rendered meaningless by the trans-class decomposition of contemporary society (1971: 186-187). So completely did class disappear from Bookchin's ideology that a review of one of his goofier books (Bookchin 1987) exclaimed that "it is what is missing altogether that renders his book terminally pathetic. Nowhere does he find fault with the most fundamental dimension of modern living, that of wage-labor and the commodity" (Zerzan 1994: 166). He now reverts to the hoary Marxist epithets—"bourgeois," "petit-bourgeois" and "lumpen"—but with no pretense that they have, for him, real social content. Otherwise, how could he apply all these words to the same people? In their relations to the means of production (or lack thereof), lifestyle anarchists cannot be both bourgeois and lumpens. And how likely is it that out of these "thousands of self-styled anarchists" (1), not one is a proletarian?

Where Bookchin accuses rival anarchists of individualism and liberalism, Stalinists accuse all anarchists of the same. For example, there was that *Monthly Review* contributor who referred to Bookchinism as "a crude kind of individualistic anarchism" (Bookchin 1971: 225)! In other words,

...capitalism promotes egotism, not individuality or "individualism."...The term "bourgeois individualism," an epithet widely used today against libertarian elements, reflects the extent to which bourgeois ideology permeates the socialist project—

—these words being, of course, those of Bookchin the Younger (1971: 284). That the Dean reverts to these Stalinist slurs in his dotage reflects the extent to which bourgeois ideology permeates his project. Fanatically devoted to urbanism, the Dean was being complimentary, not critical, when he wrote that "the fulfillment of individuality and intellect was the historic privilege of the urban dweller or of individuals influenced by urban life" (1974: 1). Individuality's not so bad after all, provided it's on his terms.

As for "decadence," that is an eminently bourgeois swearword for people perceived to be having more fun than you are. By now the word has lost whatever concrete meaning it ever had. Calling post-leftist anarchists "decadent" is just Dean Bookchin's way of venting his envy and, as Nietzsche would say, *ressentiment* that they are not afflicted with the hemorrhoids, tax audits, or whatever it is that's raining on his Mayday parade.

To read the rest of Bob's text, copies of his 176-page book are

available from C.A.L. Press (c/o AAA, POB 11331, Eugene, OR 97440, U.S.A. for \$10.00 postpaid (\$7.95 + \$2.05 postage & handling). Bulk discounts are available. All orders must be prepaid.

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Rare Praise; or BOOKCHIN HATES US

(and... *that's a good thing*)

Paul Z. Simons

"There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism."

-Benjamin

"In the face of totalitarian unity...something of the liberating social forces may even have converged in the sphere of the individual. Critical Theory lingers there without a bad conscience."

-Adorno

What fascinates in Murray Bookchin's essay, "Social Anarchism versus Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Chasm," is two-fold; first, while attempting to level a withering critique of what he terms "lifestyle anarchism," he in fact ends up doing a relatively good job of inadvertently supporting and strengthening the critical component of this tendency. Second, Bookchin has pinpointed a number of concepts and contravening dialectical relationships without any seeming understanding of their importance or how they operate. This is particularly evident when Bookchin targets and misses the concepts of individual and society. Yet it is possible that out of bad critique may proceed good critical theory. Ignoring then, the verbose hyperbole and discounting the personal attacks, it should be possible to minimally extract the idea of the individual from Bookchin's essay, to examine his discussion of it and then to return to first principles and to offer an outline of a dialectical anthropology of this singular and central concept.

Bookchin's methodology when dealing with the individual is less to discuss the concept than to describe the various pathways that would lead to the realiza-

tion of the individual. He establishes an essential tension between autonomy ("a self-managing ego, independent of...reliance upon others for its maintenance) and freedom (which "dialectically interweaves the individual with the collective"). Given Bookchin's own definitions he has at this level confused an assumed "dialectical" relationship ("freedom") with a single trait ("autonomy") associated with the fully realized individual. The appropriate "dialectical" relationship would have been autonomy versus say "un-autonomy" or perhaps slavery. Oddly enough, however, contained within this shoddy dialectical usage, Bookchin manages to blunder close to the real conundrum, and then again—he doesn't. One need only apply a cursory look to his pseudo-dialectic to see the underlying truth that resides there, specifically the very real and historical dialectic of individual and society.

What is missing in the essay is a definition of what Bookchin means when he uses the term individual. For while he dismisses the concept of the ego as developed by Kant, and later Fichte, he proposes no alternative definition. While we will return to the concept of the individual in Western philosophy momentarily, suffice it to say that even Adorno found himself bound to the Kantian concept of the ego (divorced from its idealist flora) for the important reason that it is the starting point of the critique of reason (and indeed, of all Critical Theory). Which takes us to a place where we must view where the concept of the individual has been in the past two millennia and how it has developed in relation to society.

As with most concepts in Western culture, one is inevitably lead back to Ancient Greece to find there the genesis

of any given continuous idea. The individual is no exception. Horkheimer identified the emergence of the individual in the tales of the Greek heroes and this is probably close. Yet nearer the mark are the Greek heroines—for a number of reasons. Oedipus, upon discovery of his terrible secret, blinds himself—in an act of self-punishment—consequently crashing the ego back into society in the form of the invalid. Antigone, on the other hand, feels no such compulsion to repent for her transgression. Creon, in this instance, metes out her terrible punishment (live entombment), in the name of a very "social" justice.

It is Socrates who at the philosophical level defines and defends the abstract concept of the individual (and its autonomy). Horkheimer locates the moment of divergence between individual conscience and the state from the trial of Socrates. This judgment is clearly tinged with the contention of the early Critical Theorists that the rational society is also a statist society. The original dialectical break is continued and deepened by the Socratic disciples, Plato and Aristotle. Plato in the *Republic* attempts to harmonize the interests and talents of individuals with integration and cohesion in the group. The dominant social paradigm he evolves, however, is proto-classist, characterized by a hierarchy of tasks, responsibilities and implicitly, rewards. So, even in this first attempt at a mechanistic utopia, while it would be pleasant to be in the caste of the philosopher-kings, it is essential to remember that their luxury is purchased at the price of slave labor.

Aristotle continues this drift towards the ascendancy of society in the resolution of the dialectic with the individual. His pronouncement on the duty of

slaves, and women and children—strict obedience—is indicative of where philosophy generally was headed. The Stoics, while still theorizing the autonomous individual, find that the method whereby the ideal is achieved is through utter self-renunciation, the elimination of desire, emotion and affect. The Stoic posture of turning inward, verging on catatonia, has always appeared to be a retreat in the face of the growing hegemony of society, a refuge for the defeated ego.

Homer's *Odyssey* completes our picture of the Hellenic view of society and the individual. For while Odysseus, the proto-bourgeois, represents not only the apex of hierarchy, as both ship's captain and king, he also comes to represent society itself through the coercive and cunning control he exercises over both his men and Nature. What interests then in the *Odyssey* are not the wiles of Odysseus but the antics of his incredibly recalcitrant crew. Not only do they disobey Odysseus in a consistent and occasionally mutinous manner, but they do so invariably in pursuit of pleasure, sexual and otherwise. In one episode several crew members become addicted, despite warnings, to lotus eating (poppy eating?), "All who ate the lotus...thought no more of reporting to us or returning. Instead they wished to stay in the company of the Lotus Eater, picking the lotus and forgetting their homeland." Such idylls, however, aren't really exemplary behavior for integrated and productive members of society, and Odysseus knows this. "...I forced them, weeping, back to the ships...and bound them to the benches." Society is triumphant over the pleasuring and pleased individual. The use of coercion in this example is happenstance, whether by force or cunning, the collectivity does what is required to satisfy its needs. Lotus eaters become sailors not because it is moral, but because it is necessary.

The advent of the Christian era heralds a number of innovations in the concept of the individual. Most notably the human animal gains a soul, the dwelling place of god within the individual. Life itself comes to be understood as an interlude, a single chapter in the complete story of the journey of the soul. The era is also informed by the story of Christ, who in his dealings with

authority, both religious and secular, his tortures, sacrifice and ultimately triumphant resurrection represents the quintessential individual. This model of the individual will be played out repeatedly in the next thousand years and will be particularly evident in the lives of both saints and heretics.

The similarities between these two seemingly apposite groups of individuals are striking. For example, it is quite easy to imagine that under a less liberal pope, Francis of Assisi may well have been burned as a heretic. His writings border on pantheism and his actions were not far behind; the Blessing of the Animals, for instance, virtually institutionalizes his conjecture on the possibility of animals having souls. Given the accepted dogma of the Church at this time that Nature—as a category—was identified with the uncontrollable, the ungodly and ultimately as the source of much mischief; it isn't hard to see that both pope and cardinals had to either canonize or demonize Francis. On the other side of the fence there is John Hus, who in 1414 was burned at the stake for advocating disobedience to papal decree when it ran counter to the law of Christ. Both men, sons of the merchant class, represent a faithful retelling of the Christ myth. The self-renunciation of Francis, Hus's frequent and fiery collisions with authority, both secular and sacerdotal. Again the tableau of the individual, defined and defining itself outside society and in contradistinction to it. The refusal of authority in favor of the dictates of individual conscience, or the revelatory commands of God, motivate both heretic and saint. Chiliasm or piety, self-abnegation or orgy, all are markers on the road to heaven or the pyre.

In the final analysis of the Christian Era then, the individual as repository of the soul takes on new and singular importance. This valuation, however, is contingent upon renunciation of the self. Augustinianism, which exalted the soul at the expense of the individual was ultimately buried under the expansive arguments of Thomism, with its stress on the ultimate reconciliation between heaven and earth, and in this instance, between individual and soul, sets the stage for modern philosophical discussions. Specifically, in the name of an

unobtainable reconciliation, the individual will become utterly subsumed by society, even to the point of very nearly losing its meaning.

The historical backdrop to the discussion of the individual as conceived in the modern era is the French Revolution. Prior to the Revolution the individual, both conceptual and empirical, was bound to society through an interlocking web of duties, rights and obligations both religious and secular. The Revolution stripped this impressive legal and conceptual net away, leaving exposed, for the first time in history, the individual standing in direct relation to the institutions of state and society. In this sense, the Revolution merely completed and secularized what the Reformation (and Counter-Reformation) set in motion centuries before. This was not some unintended sequelae of the Revolution, the participants sought to eradicate all the institutions and vestiges of the *ancien regime*, and they did so with a vengeance. By way of example, feudalism was legislated out of existence in a single night (10 August, 1789), and the Le Pelletier Law, which forbade any combination of employers or workers (particularly medieval guild structures) was passed with universal approval.

Across the Rhine these developments were being watched closely by a group of philosophers who would seek to give voice and justification to the developments which were daily making a mockery of society as constituted. Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel would all wrestle with the events (and the ideas that inspired them) that were being played out in Paris. Marcuse in *Reason and Revolution* is correct when he states that the driving motivation of the German Idealists was to identify a unifying principle that would preserve bourgeois, liberal society without falling prey to its inherent contradictions and antagonisms. This search in all cases started with the individual and described the relation of the individual to itself, "reality" and society generally. What is important methodologically in these philosophers is what sociology terms their "unit of analysis," specifically the consciousness (and actions) of the individual become the standards whereby freedom, morality and reason are measured. For Kant and the others then, the question became

how and through what devices does an individual become and stay free in society. Adorno in *Negative Dialectics* describes succinctly the mechanics of one solution, "The subjects are free, after the Kantian model, in so far as they are aware of and identical with themselves; and then again, they are unfree in such identity in so far as they are subjected to, and will perpetuate, its compulsion. They are unfree as diffuse, non-identical nature; and yet, as that nature they are free because their overpowering impulse—the subject's nonidentity with itself is nothing else—will also rid them of identity's coercive nature." In everyday terms, the more an individual follows his or her impulses the closer they come to be identical with themselves and, by extrapolation, reconciled with others. This "self" that they come to be identical with is nothing more than the potential of the realized individual defining its own place within society. As Adorno goes on to point out, the opposing philosophical tradition where freedom is necessarily linked with responsibility is generally resonant with the current repressive order. While Bookchin would designate such theoretics "bourgeois" it is difficult to dismiss the emancipatory implications of both Kant's and Adorno's discussion.

As Idealism progressed, however, the individual became less and less important and the philosophers were drawn deeper and deeper into authoritarian solutions. Fichte near the end of his career wrote the racist, proto-Nazi *Addresses to the German Nation* and Hegel in his final system actually designated the Absolute as nothing other than the Prussian State.

Today it is embarrassing to even raise the subject of the individual. Under the pressure of mass culture, an economy that is developing technology far faster than it can be used for profit extraction and an utter malaise associated with institutional breakdown on a global scale, to return to the individual should be a futile and unrewarding philosophical journey. The early Critical Theorists became interested in the individual only after the Second World War and in response to what they saw as the ultimate triumph and hegemony of class society. In the absence of the social potential for revolution they returned

instinctively to the potential contained within the individual. This appears to be a proper retrenchment. For in the absence of authentic opposition, Critical Theory must return to the individual, and through discussions and enunciation of the insurrectionary potential contained therein, the truly human community of the future is also conceived.

A few final thoughts on the intellectual dishonesty contained in Bookchin's essay. Bookchin makes the statement that traditional anarchism had four basic tenets, one of which is a commitment to direct democracy.

Bookchin indulges over and again in equating individualism with a creeping fascism, while at the same time praising anarcho-syndicalism. Evidently Murray has missed some twenty years of scholarship about the direct and empirical linkage between fascism and syndicalism. David D. Roberts' groundbreaking, "The Syndicalist Tradition and Italian Fascism," or more recently Ze'ev Sternhell's excellent review of the French fascisms, "Neither Right nor Left; Fascist Ideology in France," are but two examples of where this "not-so-new" scholarship is going. The culmination of this "cross-pollination" occurs in Portugal in 1935 when members of the National Syndicalists, a fascist association, and adherents of the FAI (Federacion Anarquista Iberica) planned and implemented an ultimately unsuccessful *coup*. Further, individualism is identified continually in the fascist press, by fascists, for fascists, as the ultimate enemy of their movement. "The individual, so we teach today, has as such neither the right nor the duty to exist, since all rights and all duties derive only from the community," from a National Socialist pamphlet, *Staat, Bewegung, Volk* published in Hamburg in 1933 and probably authored by those Marxists-gone-to-the-dark-side, the Strasser Brothers. So much for "Stirnerite lumpens" finding any common ground with "fascist lumpens."

Finally, Bookchin lies by omission when he offers a quote from Horkheimer. This is the one that really rankles, Bookchin has no business quoting the early Critical Theorists, insofar as he obviously doesn't have the intellectual equipment to even begin to understand them. He quotes from *The Eclipse*

of *Reason*, "individuality is impaired when each man decides to fend for himself...The absolutely isolated individual has always been an illusion. The most esteemed personal qualities, such as independence, will to freedom, sympathy, and the sense of justice are social as well individual virtues. The fully developed individual is the consummation of a fully developed society." Fair enough, but what Bookchin leaves out is the final sentence of the paragraph, "The emancipation of the individual is not an emancipation from society, but the deliverance of the society from atomization, an atomization that may reach its peak in periods of collectivization and mass culture." It is this final sentence that informs the struggle of the individual against society. To deliver a society from atomization requires the realization of the potential of each individual. What Bookchin and his ilk believe is that this task belongs to society, what this generation of Critical Theorists know is that these are the same old murderous promises dressed up with new bows and wrapping paper. The gift inside is a monster called Social Ecology sent by a guru from Vermont, who for the past twenty years has been "turning rebellion into money."

Bookchin's article is an accolade, a laurel. This generation of Critical Theorists has put to death the false opposition. The Left That Was, which Bookchin pines for, is gone forever; buried in its flyers and buttons and petitions and manifestoes, its excrement. Bookchin is correct, there is an unbridgeable chasm between false opposition and Critical Theory, it is the difference between the living and the dead, between a tradition that immortalizes failure and a philosophy based on utter contestation, which will be realized only when it stands triumphant over the corpse of the dominant society. Bookchin, though he uses the term dialectic, clearly never understood its meaning. Hegel observed, "The antitheses which used to be expressed in terms of mind and matter, body and soul, faith and reason...became transformed as culture advanced into contrasts between reason and the senses, intelligence and nature and, in its most general form, between absolute subject

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In Search of the Unabomber

Laure Akai

If much discussion has been devoted to the terror tactics used by the so-called Unabomber, then the manifesto produced by FC should spawn a debate much larger; it no doubt is an important work (in the fact that many people read it, not because of any pretense to originality) full of questions for anarchists, anti-authoritarians, anarchoids, anarcho-syndicalists, primitivists and leftists to mull over and argue. Yet too many people are quick to dismiss FC as a right-wing kook or some generic primitivist; this is a very convenient position especially for collective-powerists and moralist ideologues who seek to create ideologically pure movements with themselves at helm; they can use their moral disgust with FC's violence to dismiss or avoid discussion of ideas which may be critical of their brand of politics or their vision of revolution. (Actually, the ideas expressed by FC are sometimes remarkably similar to the ideas of many revolutionary individualists, "primitivists," wild anti-authoritarians and others who have also met with much intolerance from people such as the leftist/authoritarian flank of the anarchist movement, not to mention society as a whole. So, long overdo on the agenda for discussion is not really the use of violence, but the embracing of industrial/technological civilization and the focus on collective rule over individual responsibility in different segments of the anti-statist milieu.)

The Unabomber Manifesto contains a wealth of ideas but is also somewhat poorly organized and somewhat contradictory. This is a shame because it becomes its most cohesive about a third of the way through; many readers will have no doubt given up on the tract before then. Although FC claims to be anarchist, it understands that many anarchists will reject its vision of anarchy, if due to nothing more than its reliance on violence to get its message out. Many anarchists will likely reject the manifesto because of the belief that technological society may be reformed on a libertarian model. (An unquestioning attitude towards technology is

dominant.) But FC's critique of technology and its infringement on freedom should not confine it to the lunatic fringe any more than should the traditional anarchist correlation of the state with various forms of human misery.

First, let me start off by saying that I'm not going to try to give the work an anarchist seal of approval; I don't want to say an anarchist should think this, this and that, do X, Y and Z or they are not an anarchist because that's the game of movementists and not free-thinking individuals. I've never met a self-professed anarchist who was free of contradiction, least of all those who think they are; I'd rather agree or disagree with individual points of philosophy or action than to beat an ideology into the shape I want it to be. There are, undoubtedly, parts of the Unabomber Manifesto that are clearly anarchist and other parts that echo sentiments of a truly anti-authoritarian nature. There are also parts which I find somewhat suspect or weak. We can begin by looking at some of the clearly anarchist positions and some ideas which deserve more attention by truly freedom-loving individuals.

UB (FC) spends a great deal of time examining the artificial needs created by our society. Whether or not you agree that all activity above the primal activity of providing food, shelter and clothing should be considered surrogate activity, it is very clear that many of the needs of modern man are artificial, created to serve some other purpose. Take the artificial needs and desires as dictated by advertising and marketing. UB rightly points out that although society professes up all these artificial needs, many people feel unsatisfied; even after attaining what we think we need, we may feel unfulfilled because we are not aware of what we really need, that is, to be autonomous, free individuals. UB's insistence that the need to be free and to control one's life is real while other needs are largely artificial is also a classic anarchist idea.

The ideas about attaining fulfillment that UB develops of course are radically different

than those of enlightenment-inspired classical anarchists. Whereas many have attributed to man the never-ending urge to go forward and to build ever more complex civilizations, UB maintains that people's real goals are much simpler. He writes about the "power process," part of which is the attainment of goals. This, he claims, is a fundamental part of human nature. Can this, however, be a biological instinct? We cannot answer that question, but it is clear that the goals we set for ourselves are a product of our environment. Goals can be as fundamental as obtaining food and shelter, but here we can see the instinct for survival, for physical satisfaction as opposed to a need for psychological satisfaction. As the real need to fulfill our requirements for survival become, I would argue not easier, because wage slavery is not easy, but different, those for whom survival is more effortless than not must set up "artificial goals."

To what extent, however, can we say these goals are artificial? Obviously there is a difference between someone whose goal is to collect as many samples of Elvis memorabilia as possible and someone whose goal is to build a house or to learn to play a musical instrument. The need to have leisure activities is ancient and at some point people decided to do something besides frolic. The author is not claiming, as some unsavvy readers have figured, that human life should be a struggle for survival; the point is that society sets up goals upon which a person's psychological well-being may even depend. How many people have gone into depression because their house doesn't look the way it should—how many yuppies in waiting have lost it learning they didn't get into the right college? Even though the rules for survival have been radically altered in post-industrial society, these goals are not really fundamentally important to our being. (I guess they have never thought that the society that has abolished every adventure makes the greatest adventure the abolition of that society.)

The term "surrogate activity," however, seems far too universal to be disparaged.

Activity may have no "goal" other than enjoyment, or may be goal-oriented. It may seriously affect the psyche or be part of one's character armor. Or it may be participated in rather disinterestedly. It may be "useful" or not (this is another discussion). Thus human activity, if it truly is *human* activity (and not animal activity) cannot so easily be divided into "primal activity" and "surrogate activity" if we are to assume, as UB does, that goal-oriented activity is a part of "human nature." First, there is much evidence that primitive peoples spent far less time at this "primal activity" than modern man spends working, which would mean that for a very long time people have had to fill their time with surrogate activity. If there exists a biological imperative for fulfilling needs other than the primal, then where do we draw the line between "psychologically necessary" and "psychosocially unnecessary"? Although such discussions cannot be treated in such a short manifesto, and although the point is appreciated, the terms given seem too absolute.

(Perhaps as a helpless product of civilization, I cannot help feeling that the multitude of experiences available in modern society is a benefit to my psychic health. I know many people—whose lives consist of getting married, having kids and dying—who are "fulfilled." But I'd rather have a wider range of experience. I must be sick, like the consumer who must try 100 different brands of toothpaste. This is a difficult part of UB's philosophy. Even more difficult are people who would radically alter the way we spend our time. While many people may be willing to give up certain comfort for the greater benefit of the environment or give up certain comforts for greater autonomy, few people will be convinced to narrow their range of fulfilling activities to the simplest. It is not at all clear that such a life can be filled with pleasure and not monotony.)

UB examines some methods of social control and if one thinks about it, it is easy to see how certain technologies necessitate strict control and others severely impede people's freedoms. Yet the technophile, even the technoceptive, maintain that technology can be reformed. This is where UB's philosophy will differ radically from many. I believe that UB is correct in concluding that the industrial system cannot be radically changed to offer the individual maximum participation in his or her life and freedom from its long-range effects. Production requires a

certain sacrifice of individual freedom if one is to participate in it. (Many anarchists of the liberal ilk would naively argue that nobody would coerce people to participate in an industrial system under anarchy, yet no doubt there would be forces to convince them to give up some of their absolute freedom for the work of society, and where those forces are, there are apt to be more.) The UB argues that even in a workers' democracy of the syndicalist model, large organizations would have to regulate the

The organization of industrial society is an impediment to small-scale self-organization. Either industry must be scaled down to a pre-industrial level or the collectivists should come up with a more detailed description of how they envision technology and collectivism to work allowing for maximum freedom.

running of many industries, utilities, etc.. The organizations, if they don't run the danger of becoming *de facto* power structures, still minimize, by necessity, the role of the individual. "Technological societies," UB argues, "cannot be broken down into small, autonomous communities, because production depends on the cooperation of very large numbers of people. When a decision affects, say, a million people, then each of the affected individuals has, on the average, only a one-millionth share in making the decision." Without individual autonomy in decision making, a person might find new problems with the governance of work.

I can hear the collectivists screaming, "But the individual will must be subjected to the collective good!" (Actually that's my next door neighbor the Stalinist.) Herein lies one of the most fundamental anarchist bags of worms. We know that no collective opinion is better than an individual opinion simply because it is held by more people. Who, then, gets to define the collective good, except of course the majority. Maybe the majority will have ideas I agree with—maybe they won't. Maybe future generations will simply agree with the future majority. "You go off and live on your land and we'll live on ours. We promise not to go coal mining on your land, unless of course, we run out of coal on ours." I see possibilities for the creation of new forms of hierarchy, for the

continued expansion of technology and the environmental destruction necessary to maintain it, and for the negation of minority views by the majority. I'm not saying that this would be worse than at present, or that I wouldn't take part in such collectivist folly, it's just that few people seem to realize that large governing bodies, as opposed to small autonomous groupings, are part and parcel of a highly complex, industrialized society and that there are alternatives to this which are no doubt more conducive to local organizing. The organization of industrial society is an impediment to small-scale self-organization. Either industry must be scaled down to a pre-industrial level or the collectivists should come up with a more detailed description of how they envision technology and collectivism to work allowing for maximum freedom. I say that they should come up with this description, because if they really believe in their vision, they should be able to defend it against criticism; of course this is all the realm of theory; we never can know what would really happen "if."

Many people cringe at the implications of such discussion. Whereas the Marxoid left may place the destruction of capitalism as the first order on the agenda, and some anarchists the smashing of the state, of capitalism, etc., FC places the destruction of technology on top of the list. As a matter of fact, not only does it top the list, FC advises that it should be the only real concern of the revolutionist. Do all social problems stem from civilization? (That reminds me of one of Marx's main flaws.) Well, UB does hold the opinion that most of them do. (Although admitting that certain primitive people had a "problem" with cross-dressing. Oh, we mustn't get our genders confused. [What an aberration.]) Although I don't necessarily agree with the primacy of UB's advice, I do understand that the use of technology deserves an extremely important place in the discussion of social revolution; those who choose to disregard its importance are sticking their heads in the sand.

UB is obviously not a person who just needed a convenient label to pin upon himself; this is more than I can say about some of the people I've heard who have disowned and denounced him. UB has given some thought to his vision of anarchy and what is necessary to achieve it. This, however, is far from enough for some, and even infuriates others. How could this terrorist blemish the shining image of anarchism? Perhaps even

worse than being a terrorist is the fact that UB is not an anarchist of the join and change variety; he does not say: organize to overthrow oppression, you'll be the moral majority one day! In fact he sees identification with political movements as substitutes for the power process. He does not eschew revolutionary organization, nor does he disavow the desire to organize for change as a legitimate effort to take back power, but the implications of this idea is that joining a movement, may, in some cases, have more to do with personal than societal change, although it is understood that some personal change can only occur when society is transformed. Further along, UB not only criticizes leftists, but accuses leftist movements of being so rife with power hungry, compromising, would-be leaders that it is better off not to go near them. The problem that many anarchoids seem to have with this is that his description of leftists is too ambiguous and too close to their descriptions of themselves. Too many people still see politics in terms of left wing and right wing agendas. Here is where the left flank can pick up fuel for its arsenal; leftists will claim that if he is not left, he is right. Furthermore, they may take his seeming dismissal of gay rights, feminist and other movements as proof of this point. Although UB later clarifies this point (in a footnote) and claims that it is the movements that are fucked, not individuals who care about these issues, I find this somewhat ingenuous.

Why is the *Psychology of Modern Leftism* the introductory issue after the main thesis? The position of this question in the work is rather strange. There are three very possible ideas to consider: a. that the Unabomber cannot organize his immense ideas well; b. that the Unabomber has some hang ups and is not entirely comfortable with certain (liberal) ideas; c. the Unabomber is constantly in a predominantly leftist milieu and thus these issues are immediately relevant to his everyday life.

Especially revealing about the Unabomber is point number 14 which gives extremely brief treatment to feminists and uses three words that give the author away as carrying stereotypes: desperate, anxious and nag. (He writes "Feminists are desperately anxious to prove that women are as strong and as capable as men. Clearly they are nagged by a fear that women may *not* be as strong and as capable as men.") As anybody who has been stereotyped due to their gender knows, it is annoying to have assumptions made about your abilities. Any woman who has

gone to a political function with a man who was greeted, handed a flier and spoken to while she was ignored, anybody who was laughed at in school when she said she wants to try out for the soccer team, anybody who has been pushed aside by a man saying "let me handle that" when the car breaks down may indeed want to, or even need to, prove that she is as strong or as capable as a man. This is not the same as being nagged by a fear of being inferior.

UB is so off the mark on the feminist

[The Unabomber] not only criticizes leftists, but accuses leftist movements of being so rife with power hungry, compromising, would-be leaders that it is better off not to go near them.

issue that we are tempted to conclude that either he is in the company of exclusively weak-charactered feminists or that he is a man who cannot understand women and probably does not get laid as often as he wants and is thus resentful. (The second option could explain why he has the space to make bombs without being discovered.)

While we are questioning the personal politics of UB—the idea that the pursuit of sex and love is not a surrogate activity may be true, but why does the author(s) add the seemingly unnecessary and biologically untrue words "with a member of the opposite sex" to "most people... would feel deprived if they passed their lives without ever having a relationship"? Is it that the author is a heterosexual who just wrote without thinking or was he really thinking about the "majority" of people, who seemingly really are more heterosexual than not? Or do we have someone here who views pansexuality and homosexuality as aberrations? I cannot answer that question, obviously, but I'm sure that most readers have met individuals who both assume all sexuality to be heterosexual and don't take women activists seriously and have noticed that they often have some similar psychological aspects. (It is worth pointing out that since the sixties, there have been many variations on "back to nature" ideology, from "low impact" communitarian ideologies to deep ecology and that amongst these ideologies' adherents one may find neo-Malthusians, fascists of different sorts, race separatists, strength supremacists (read male dominants) and homophobes. One might suppose that the total rejection of

current civilization is a pose that allows such types to go by easier than they could pass, say in mainstream leftist politics, at least in America. I will not make, I cannot make, any judgement about the real lived social politics of this individual (and I tend to think it is an individual), but I am rather curious. Of course the answers would not change the overall perceptiveness of the manifesto, but, it is important to understand the psychology of individuals who may espouse a certain philosophy, if only to understand what can be compatible with what and where lies room for contradictions or philosophical short-sightedness.)

There are some other telling comments. In section 219 UB complains that (in leftist society) no one can be allowed to have a negative attitude towards homosexuals, disabled people, fat people, old people, ugly people and so on. While UB may have been saying that no individual person can have

a negative attitude towards another individual who happens to be a member of an oppressed group without being labelled a racist, sexist, homophobe or so on, my gut feeling is that he could have been clearer if that was what he was saying and that this is the irrational side of the MAN behind FC. (You Tarzan, me Jane. Men were born to be wild, not to wear lipstick and make quiche.) In another words, we got a good, old fashioned, as-nature-intended guy. (People were born hetero to procreate, the disabled would die out of the gene pool, women should do as nature intended, the races were born separate for a reason, fat people are fat because they watch too much TV, etc..) Also, check out the idea about having as many kids as you can. (You all thought it was a gag when I wrote about "The Society for the Procreation of the Anarchist Race.") Yeah, he gets the fun part of that deal; I wonder if he'd be so high on the idea if he got morning sickness and swollen nipples. Yuck—I don't care if there *is* an extended family—I'm not going to primitive-land if I have to get knocked up every time I get laid. (I'm just poking fun. Actually primitive people knew quite a lot about birth control and they didn't have to worry about procreating to make a social revolution!)

While UB makes some clear arguments against thinking you can organize a revolution based on leftist reform movements, he also seems to make some overly broad statements on leftist psychology. (His closing arguments against leftism being so much stronger than the opening ones, he should have used them first.) It does not help that

the language used is similar to the rhetoric of the far right. Does the leftist hate America and the West because they are strong and successful? It is true that many leftists champion the underdog and this means that they have done such crazy things as take Iraq's side in the war, supported petty commie dictators and the like. But identifying with the weak and their right not to be bullied by the strong is not the same as disliking America because it is "successful." What, exactly, is America successful at? At being a democracy? This is a very strange adjective to describe America and sounds more apt to come out of the mouth of a nationalist of some sort than anybody interested in smashing the state. It is not clear that American leftists hate America for reasons other than what they say: that there is social injustice in the country, because it is imperialist. Yes, many leftists do have a double standard, but it seems that UB is a bit defensive on this issue. Why?

Why also does UB mention nazis and militiamen in his examples of refusal? I am not arguing that these aren't examples of refusal of some sort, but they are also examples of acceptance. They certainly would not be among the first examples of refusal I would mention.

UB is obviously an individualist of sorts, but there are different types of individualists. There are individualists who espouse "moralism," who believe, to a certain extent in social responsibility while wanting to be free from socializing forces. They would argue that certain impositions on absolute personal freedom are necessary if one is to respect the freedom of others. And there are others for whom these issues of coexistence are perhaps secondary. There is no reason to believe that UB's brand of individualism is highly developed and not of the infantile kind.

First, we see several instances of how UB places the primacy of his own reactions over the psychological welfare of people with whom he may interact. He is seemingly defending a parent's right to spank a child, and although I might agree that violence in some cases may be clearer than words, one must also think of the consequences of one's actions on other people. Similarly, if UB is defending people's right to have negative reactions to, say, gay people (although this is not totally clear), then he is ignoring real issues in socialization, such as the fact that negative reactions are usually learned responses and that people who are unfortunate enough to have to live through such reaction often have difficulties adjusting. UB also seems to favor the view that people are naturally competitive or that there is nothing wrong with being competitive. Of course

there is something wrong with being competitive when society awards certain higher status to the "winners": a social hierarchy can only result.

Fuck tech.

It is significant that UB makes repeated use of the words successful, inferior and superior. "Overly socialized" people are generally antagonistic to people being labelled as "inferior" or "superior" due to the fact that these values are most often not scientific and are loaded with many consequences. Take for example the supposed genetic links being IQ and intelligence. (UB criticizes leftists for disavowing genetic theories.) Of course genetics do play some part in intelligence, but certain types of intelligence are not accurately measured in IQ tests and people may be average in some areas but gifted in others. There certainly is enough evidence to suggest that certain spheres of intelligence can be improved, and that environment does play a major part in the acquisition of different types of knowledge. (It is also a fact that certain types of intelligence are more highly valued by society than others.) If a person is "inferior" (and this is really a loaded term for anybody to use) it cannot be his "fault" if he is genetically programmed to be that way. "Fault" can only be implied if a person is not as smart as he or she should, genetically, be (which of course is impossible to predict), at which point the fault can either be attributed to the person, his surroundings, or a combination of both. If UB is supporting a genetic view of intelligence, then the word *fault* should be removed from his vocabulary; if not he should give the leftists more due for their suspicions about genetic theory. In any case section 18 is not well thought out and smacks of the influences of right wing radicals which can often be found in EFi or Loompanics circles. (And apparently other places—I admit that I don't know much about these bozos except that they exist.)

One could thus argue that the UB manifesto does not attempt to impart any visions of harmonic society because it is basically anti-social.

It is important to be more precise when examining the problems of humans as social beings versus humans as socialized beings, for this may present a major difference in perceptions of what it means to exercise one's freedom. Although I may agree with many of UB's observations, I feel myself in a different camp than FC because of such social issues. This does not mean that I should try to distance myself from his ideas as much as possible, that I should panic about my brand of individualism being forever discredited by the bourgeoisie and the left, and engage in some of the tactics of

denunciation others seem to be using. The fact is that we must understand that technology is an odious thing; who could blame a person for trying to strike out against it? It all seems to come down to the fact that people feel like they have to worry about the impact of FC on their own ideologies because they themselves have not managed to make them into strong, living practices. What does it really say about ideologues that cannot stand a plurality of views, that must place ideas into such absolute camps as good and bad, anarchist and not-anarchist instead of intelligently examining their different facets?

UB's views on leftism should not be assumed to be simply reactionary; he does understand something of the mass psychology of leftism. Particularly the search for strength in the collective rather than oneself. UB also stands for the rights of minorities to make change, which is contradictory to the hypocritical democratic values of many leftists. The section on leftist tactics is also worthy of discussion. UB realizes that many have a martyr instinct and often prefer masochistic tactics. This may be in part self-hatred, as UB contends, but more likely is the attitude that love=death, that giving up one's life (or safety) is the extreme proof of caring or commitment. The instinct to be recognized as "good" by others (through the sacrifice mode) is stronger than the instinct to recognize oneself as good and to preserve oneself intact. The leftist/collectivist is more

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tivity and absolute objectivity. To transcend such ossified antitheses is the sole concern of reason. This concern does not imply hostility to opposites and restrictions in general; for the necessary course of evolution is *one* factor of life which advances by opposites: and the totality of life at its most intense is only possible as a new synthesis out of the most absolute separation." The lesson of the dialectic is unmistakable, only through total contestation, an uncompromising Critical Theory, will the future be made, and history realized. Negation is the only task left to philosophy.

We stand in a unique place in history. Capital and its systems are beginning to totter, not from lack of profit, but from lack of interest. Institutional decay is rampant, and on a global scale. Crisis management may well become the science of the future and one begins to wonder just how many holes the dike can withstand. Now that society's false opposition has breathed its last, the time has come to do the same to society itself.

The Spartacist School of Falsification

Max Anger

The perpetually obnoxious Spartacist League has been publishing lies about the history of 20th century revolutionary movements in their newspaper *Workers Vanguard* [sic]. Fearing that they may be losing ground to an admittedly incoherent contemporary anarchism, and hungry for fresh cannon fodder, the Sparts have been running an occasionally informative series of articles by Joseph Seymour, titled "Marxism vs. Anarchism," tracing the historic differences between anarchism and their version of "Marxism."

In part 7 of this series (*Workers Vanguard*, Aug. 30, 1996, pp.7-8), the part dealing with the Russian Revolution of 1917-1921, Seymour claims: "The most significant counterrevolutionary force under the banner of anarchism was the Ukrainian peasant-based army of Nestor Makhno, which carried out pogroms against Jewish communities and collaborated with White armies against the Bolsheviks."

Seymour makes these accusations without providing any documentation, and with good reason, for outside of Stalinist hagiographies, Stalin-era fiction like Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don* and Seymour's fevered imagination no evidence exists to support his claims. Surviving partisans of the Makhnovist movement, for example Makhno's comrade the ex-Bolshevik Peter Arshinov in his *History of the Makhnovist Movement*, the anarchist historian Voline in his work *The Unknown Revolution*, and independent historians who are not friends of revolution or anarchism like Stanford scholar Michael Paliz in his book *The Anarchism of Nestor Makhno*, affirm that:

(1) The Makhnovist movement was a mass revolutionary movement of the poor in the Southern Ukraine, and fielded an army of several tens of thousands of partisans in the Russian Civil War. The revolutionary movement lasted from the spring of 1918 until the final wholesale massacre of its partisans, and large numbers of non-combatant sympathizers, by the Bolsheviks in 1921.

(2) An important part in the Makhnovist movement was played by revolutionaries of Jewish origins, among them Voline. He was a key figure in the anarcho-communist

"Nabat" confederation in the Ukraine during the Russian Civil War.

(3) Jewish communities in the Ukraine furnished numerous combatants to Makhno's Insurrectionary Army. Jewish communities participated in regional revolutionary mass assemblies of workers, peasants and partisans called by the Revolutionary Military Council of the Makhnovist Army.

(4) The Makhnovists named one of their free-communist agricultural communes after Rosa Luxemburg, who as of Jewish origin.

(5) Nestor Makhno and his comrades issued numerous proclamations against anti-Semitism. On several occasions Makhno himself killed instigators of violence against the Jewish population, including a prominent bandit named Grigor'ev. (See Arshinov's *History of the Makhnovist Movement*, pp.135-7)

(6) Leah Feldman, who died in London in the late 1980s, was the last known survivor of the Makhno movement in the West. As a young girl, Feldman helped sew uniforms for the Makhnovist Army. Feldman, who was of Jewish origin, vehemently attested to the Makhnovists' violent hostility to anti-Semitism.

In *The Unknown Revolution* (p.698), Voline quotes a Jewish historian, M. Tcherikover, interviewed in Paris, who was neither an anarchist nor a revolutionary: "It is undeniable that, of all these armies, including the (so-called) Red Army, the Makhnovists behaved best with regard to the civil population in general and the Jewish population in particular...Do not let us speak of pogroms alleged to have been organized by Makhno himself. This is a slander or an error. *Nothing of the sort occurred.*" [my italics]

With regard to Seymour's claim that the Makhnovists "...collaborated with White armies against the Bolsheviks":

(1) The Makhnovist movement began as a class struggle of the exploited and dispossessed against the rich in the Southern Ukraine in the Spring of 1918. Makhno and his comrades helped initiate the seizure and redistribution of the wealth of the rich exploiters by poor folks. Exploiters who resisted were killed.

(2) Makhno fought against Austrian and German imperialist forces and their allies among the local gentry, as opposed to the Bolshevik regime, which collaborated with these enemies of the world revolution by signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in March 1918. Makhno's forces played a key role in the defeat of the Austro-German invasion of the Ukraine and in the defeat of the Ukrainian nationalist regime of Petliura in 1918.

(3) Makhno's forces destroyed a significant portion of the White army General Denikin's forces in September and October 1919, thus crippling Denikin's attempt at that time to take Moscow. (The Whites were the right-wing counterrevolutionary forces in the Russian Civil War.)

(4) Makhno's forces played the decisive part in the defeat of the White general Wrangel in late 1920. At that time an agreement was made between the Bolshevik state, signed by Frunze and Bela Kun, and the revolutionaries of the Makhno movement, where Makhno's forces were considered to be effectively a part of the so-called Red Army. This agreement is reproduced in Arshinov and Voline's works. Earlier, in May of 1919, the leading Bolshevik Lev Kamenev had journeyed to Makhno's headquarters and negotiated in person with Makhno.

The Bolsheviks are the only counter-revolutionaries the Makhnovists can be accurately accused of collaborating with.

Space considerations prohibit me from describing in great detail the counterrevolutionary treachery displayed by the Bolsheviks with regard to the Makhnovists. But those who read the sources mentioned above and who also read of how the Stalinists behaved during the Spanish Civil War will note many telling similarities.

Seymour peddles a similar combination of ignorance and falsehoods about the German left communists of the early 1920s and one of their organizations, the Communist Workers Party of Germany (KAPD). Far from being, as Seymour puts it, an "unstable amalgam of anarchist and communist politics," left communism was a sophisticated Marxist current with deep roots among combative wage workers and poor people in Germany and Holland. The Dutch Marxist

Anton Pannekoek, Herman Gorter and their comrades had begun developing a far-going critique of European social democracy in the decades before World War One. The left communists saw that any usefulness that may once have been played by electoral politics and trade unions had passed; in a revolutionary period proletarians would have to fight for the destruction of the bourgeois state and the abolition of wage labor and commodity relations outside of and against all pro-capitalist workers' organizations. A new historical period meant that new tactics had become necessary, and new forms of self-organization had emerged that superseded the old dichotomy of parliamentary activity and unions. These were unitary expressions of proletarian power: soviets; workers, soldiers and sailors councils; mass assemblies combining political and economic aspects of the fight against capital. Vulgar Marxists like Trotskyists, and the Stalinists they so often cheer for, will say that unions "organize workers," but the question posed by authentically anti-capitalist revolutionaries like the German communist left was a qualitative one: what do they organize the working class for? In whose interests do they act?

Trade unions and pro-capitalist parties of the left act in the interests of the capitalist system. They are organizations of proletarian defeat; they were then, they are now. As opposed to what Trotskyists claim, pro-wage-labor leftist parties and unions are not "betrayers" or "misleaders" of the working class—they are the left wing of capital, the left wing of the capitalist political circus.

Working class self-organization means taking action outside of and against the control of unions and electoral politics. The best revolutionaries who came out of Trotskyism after World War Two recognized this. For example, see the writings of Grandizo Munis. Munis was a leading member of the Trotskyists' Bolshevik-Leninist Group, which fought alongside of the anarchist revolutionaries of the "Friends of Durruti" group in the May 1937 uprising in Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War. After World War Two, Munis described labor unions as "auxiliary organs of capital" and noted that:

"...unions...function as messengers from capital to labor and as agents who help to adapt labor to the requirements of capital...Unions, having a bureaucratic and legal life of their own, merely use the working class as a docile mass to manipulate in order to increase their own power as a legal institution in our society. Unions and working people have completely different daily lives and motivations. Any 'tactical' work within

[the union apparatus], even if guided by the purest of intentions, will impede the self-activity of the exploited class, destroying their fighting spirit and barring the way to revolutionary activity.

"Lenin and Trotsky's position on revolutionary work within unions is entirely outside the realm of today's realities...There is about as much possibility of 'changing' unions in a revolutionary direction as there is of 'changing' capitalist society in general; unions use wage workers for their own particular end but wage workers will never be able to make unions serve a revolutionary goal; they must destroy them." (from *Unions Against Revolution* by G. Munis, available in anarchist bookstores or for \$1 from Black and Red, POB 02374, Detroit, MI 48202)

Trade unions and pro-capitalist parties of the left act in the interests of the capitalist system. They are organizations of proletarian defeat; ...pro-wage-labor leftist parties and unions...are the left wing of capital, the left wing of the capitalist political circus.

Lenin's and Trotsky's vision of the content of socialism and the tactics that would be valid in achieving it did not break fundamentally with the pre-WWI social democratic "Marxist" ideology of the Second International. Their equation of the content of socialism with, to quote Lenin in 1918, "a state capitalist monopoly made to benefit the entire people" helped to sink the revolutionary movement of their day.

During the First World War the Bolsheviks were a key part of the international revolutionary movement. In 1917 they regrouped many of the most combative elements of the proletarian movement in the urban centers of Russia. But shortly after the October Revolution the overwhelming circumstances of the Russian Civil War, and the pronounced deficiencies of their politics, led the Bolsheviks to pass over to the side of counterrevolution. This tendency was resisted unsuccessfully by dissident currents within the party that had some authentically communist content, the "left communists" and

the "democratic centralists." But these minority tendencies had no lasting impact. As early as 1921, the founding manifesto of the short-lived (left communist) Communist Workers International declared:

"Nothing can stop the flow of events, or obscure the truth. We are saying this without useless reticence, without sentimentalism: proletarian Russia of red October is becoming a bourgeois state."

By the time of the Kronstadt massacre the Russian Revolution was dead. To the German left communists the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is a fundamental and necessary element of revolutionary politics, meant the absolute social power of the revolutionary mass movement itself against the capitalist system, and against those who would defend it or restore it. The Makhnovist movement was an excellent example of this principle put into practice; a mass movement of the poor acting in a despotic manner against exploiters and counter-revolutionaries. For the Bolsheviks the bottom line became one of holding onto state power at any cost—at the expense of the possibility of revolution in Germany and Italy, at the expense of revolutionary forces that weren't under their control, like the Makhnovists, and at the expense of the working class in the urban areas of Russia, who were driven out of active participation in political life by the police terror of the Bolshevik party-state.

The Kronstadt uprising was the last cry of the dying revolutionary movement in Russia. By 1921 the Lenin regime wasn't a dictatorship of the proletariat, it was just a dictatorship; a clique claiming to act in the name of the working class while using terror against the working class. When the German left fought for "the dictatorship of the proletariat," they didn't mean a police state that would impose wage labor on the laboring classes and force the development of industrialization and state capitalism at their expense, which is what the Bolsheviks ended up doing.

The Sparts' Joseph Seymour is undoubtedly right when he quotes the American Trotskyist James Cannon bragging that Lenin's polemic *Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder* banished the left communists' perspective from an effective presence in the workers' movement in the U.S. and elsewhere. From the early 1920s on, the Leninist attachment to pre-WWI social democratic tactics such as electoral politics and political activity within pro-capitalist labor unions dominated the perspectives of the so-called Communists. But if these tactics were correct ones, why didn't they lead to a less dismal set of results? We must be materialists, not idealists. What was the actual

outcome of the Leninist strategies? Did Leninist strategies result in successful proletarian revolutions, giving rise to societies worthy of the human beings that live in them? The revolutionary movement in the inter-war period was defeated. The defeat of the revolutionary movement was accompanied by the rise of fascism and Stalinism, and the deaths of 50 million people in the imperialist Second World War.

Today capitalism reigns in unchallenged dominion over the planet, in every country—except, of course, in the befogged consciousness of Trotskyists, who, in their terminal fealty to Stalinism and need to compensate for their own manifest historical failure, obscenely describe regimes that exploit, imprison and murder wage laborers in Cuba, North Korea, and China as “workers’ states.”

When it comes to shooting down easy, deserving targets, like the government anarchists of Catalonia during the Spanish Civil War, the Sparts are prodigal with words. When they are compelled to deal with revolutionaries whose actions and analysis undercuts the Leninist myth they have few or no sources to cite, and nothing but lies to sell.

Trotskyism is not a theoretical tool for understanding and changing reality, but a dogma, an impoverished amalgam of social democracy and Stalinism; an ersatz “socialism” devoid of social content. Trotskyism is a religion trip worshipping Lenin and Trotsky, around whom all of history is made to revolve in a Ptolemaic system. It’s fitting that, when confronted by a revolutionary movement like the Makhnovists, Trotskyists parrot the line of the Stalinists, the more successful fellow worshippers of the Lenin mummy-cult. Trotskyism is Stalinism’s loyal opposition. Since they’ve never taken power anywhere, Trotskyists have compensated by being cheerleaders for Stalinists and pro-capitalist “national liberation” movements, forces the Trots have more in common with than class war anarcho-communists like Makhno and the left communists of the KAPD.

The defeat of the Russian Revolution, and Leninist ideology that flowed from that defeat, led the revolutionary possibilities of the 20th century into a total historical dead-end. The main historical legacy of Leninism is a globally defeated and disoriented proletariat. The working class doesn’t hold power anywhere today. But now we can see the world in a different, demystified light. New opportunities will present themselves in the coming decades. We have to utterly destroy the capitalist world order, demolish it totally, without equivocations or compromises. We can’t let the future be held hostage by the failures of the past.

In Search of the Unabomber

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highly social then the (left?)/individualist in the fact of constantly needing validation from moral judges. And also needing more approval, which tends to explain why many conform to sheepish political behavior. On the other hand, it would not be fair to neglect to scrutinize individualists with similar candor; many of the so-called individualist ilk



pick on leftists because it is too hard to change one’s behavior and thus flaunt their refusal to be PC as a radical political statement. By this I am speaking of the sexists and homophobes who make a career out of attacking feminism, while behind such a radical posture they are obscuring part of their real psychological/political agenda (*i.e.* putting women back in their place as intellectually inferior creatures by dismissing many valid critiques as emotional hysterics). I am speaking of the substance abusers who refuse to face up to the possible social consequences of their actions, and of other habit-ridden individuals who refuse to scrutinize their own behavior but are all too happy to make asinine statements about, say, the connection between violence and vegetarianism. We can find these types not only throughout regular society, but also in places like the “anarchist” milieu, often turning up in the pages of *Anarchy* where individualists of the hypersensitive ego mix with sensitive egoists all the time.

In point 21 the Unabomber tends to give more credence to the irrational fears of the white majority (a term, I needn’t remind, which is preferred by racists and usually shunned by anti-racists) than to white leftists who support affirmative action. This ignores the fact that the staunchest supporters of affirmative action are minorities themselves, not white male leftists. Obviously, UB contends, it would be more “productive” in the reformist sense to pander to stupid white

people who don’t understand class politics and real economics. If we are to take this line of reasoning, we can conclude that it is always more “productive” to reason with the people in power and their hirelings, to smile with them and try to find a compromise. We can also conclude that it is more “productive” to be nice to scientists so as not to alienate sympathizers who might be put off by people sending letter bombs. So what does the Unabomber advocate? Sometimes taking a conciliatory approach and sometimes blowing people up or always taking a conciliatory approach, or always blowing people up? The message he is sending, of course, is mixed. But it is a message that he identifies with white working class people who feel threatened and who dislike leftists. Why else would he feel that these people deserve concessions (which is obviously the conclusion one must draw) while others deserve bombs?

UB’s claims that hostility against the white majority intensifies racial hatred seemingly lessens its own responsibility for racial tensions. (Note there are none of the typical self-apologetic disclaimers there as in other sections of the manifesto.)

Point 40 of the manifesto also may provide an interesting insight as to who the Unabomber is. Many people would disagree that “in modern industrial society only minimal effort is necessary to satisfy one’s physical needs.” Obviously people from poorer countries or social backgrounds may feel that satisfying one’s needs is a major effort. Although UB admits that there is an underclass, he speaks of mainstream society where jobs are apparently available for those who go through training programs. The effort to keep them, furthermore, is labelled “modest.” This is a rather alien reality for me; almost all my blue collar relatives have lost their jobs and the white collar workers that I know also are getting the can. Of course we are not from the WASP suburban middle class, which really seems to be the only non-professional caste that can “live well” with little effort. Again I feel that there is evidence to suggest UB’s high affinity with white America. Further down in the paragraph he makes the assumption that when white activists work for the rights of non-white minorities, they are addressing issues that are not important for them personally. I know many people who are white, for whom it is personally very important that racial tolerance exist, if only because they are tired of listening to racists around them. There also may exist a certain amount of human empathy by which people become very interested in seeing justice for others. While we all may know the guilty white liberal who simultaneously patronizes non-whites and pretends to champion their causes. I am not entirely convinced that is what UB is talking about.

Judging a Bookchin by His Cover-ups

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Professor Bookchin, offers just one more system in which other people will control their lives. The flipside of this is of course that most people prefer to be told what to do; freedom is a heavy burden for people accustomed to living in a hierarchical world.

That Murray's social agenda is stuck in the nineteenth century is clear from his classic liberal assertion that individual liberty is the opposite of social freedom. I guess you either believe that or you don't. I don't, which is why I'm not a liberal. The Dean, like many backward-looking anarchists, would replace the liberal state with a confederation of workers' collectives, coordinated with computers, with immediately revocable delegates. What the anarcho-anarchists stress is the *rationality* of this distinctive form of social organization. They assure us that the commodity economy and majority-rule representative democracy are *irrational*, which is why they are deserving of non-hierarchical alternatives. They seem to believe that if enough workers understood that anarcho-syndicalism or anarcho-communism is the *most rational system*, then the overwhelming majority would choose it. The biggest obstacle to this scenario, apparently, is the irresponsible and alienating "lifestylist," who eschews mass movements for vegetarianism, who promotes "terrorism" as opposed to respectable publicity. Most people know that life isn't so facile.

The blind faith in rationality and the desire for respectability aren't the only last century left(ist/over) commitment that Professor Bookchin promotes. The other is *positivism*. He champions "history" as "the unfolding of humanity's *rational* component—its *developing* potentiality for freedom, self-consciousness, and cooperation..." (emphasis in original). I'm convinced that I'm not the only person who sees another equally crucial tendency in history: a tendency toward more sophisticated and cynical ways of manipulating and dominating people through fear and exploitation, moving towards increased alienation and competition.

Professor Bookchin's dismissal of individualists for slipping into "terrorism" and propaganda of the deed pointedly ignores "criminal" acts such as armed robbery, forgery, arson, bombings, and assassinations perpetrated by members of the IWW and CNT (among others), in the name of their respective organizations. He's not the first anti-individualist to offer this misleading one-sidedness as if it were the whole truth of the place of violence in the history of anarchism, but it is certain that he knows better. The Dean is being *dishonest* so that he can score polemical points by making all of his opponents the embodiment of evil.

As a polemicist, the Professor uses the old tactic of blurring the distinctions among his various opponents and bunching them all together in order to dismiss them all at once. Within his attack on individualism he lumps together "existentialism, recycled Situationism, Buddhism, Taoism, anti-rationalism, and primitivism." The common thread in these diverse philosophies is a "prelapsarian return to on

original, often diffuse, and even petulantly infantile ego," and he goes on to say that "they have nourished more than one reactionary political ideology over the past century." This is quite a charge, but conveniently, the learned Professor omits any examples. Readers are asked to ignore the fact that existentialism and situationist theory are extremely rational; further, we must ignore that Buddhism isn't a monolithic philosophy that can be confined to being either primitivist or futurist. We are also asked to ignore that squishing these disparate philosophies together is a cheap shot constantly used by authoritarians (leftists are always quick to label their opponents "fascist"). Dean Bookchin's rationality is only demanded from those with whom he disagrees.

Murray's main attack on individualism takes the form of a critique of "The Politics of Individualism" by L. Susan Brown, another professor. Several problems come up immediately in this approach. First, it's pretty ridiculous to make the review of a single book into an attempted dismissive condemnation of an entire tendency within anarchism; second, Brown's anarchist essays have only previously been published (as far as I know) in *Kick It Over* (which has a very limited appeal among non-leftist anarchists) severely restricts her influence; third, her book was published by the notorious Black Rose Books makes the cost of purchasing it prohibitive for most people.

Dean Bookchin attacks the alleged ahistorical notions of his opponents, but he falls victim to it himself in one particularly notable example. He avers that Brown's book "both reflects and provides the premises for the shift among Euro-American anarchists away from social anarchism and toward individualist or lifestyle anarchism." Here he's engaging in a wacky rewriting of history: individualism is arguably older than collectivist trends, and he sees "lifestylism" (not synonymous with individualism in my perspective—another example of merging) as going back at least to the 1930s, if not before. The "descent" into individualism, according to the Professor, ostensibly hit the bigtime in the late '60s, so how could Brown's book (published in 1993) "provide the premises" for it? Again Murray is just being a liar.

It is interesting to note that throughout Professor Murray's naming of his opponents, not once does he mention the writings of an unquestionably highly influential thinker, Bob Black. Bob's "work" (sorry, Bob!) is not syndicalist or communist, so he must be one of those hated individualists, or a "Stirnerite" or something, yet the Dean is strangely silent concerning this author of several books and countless articles. Perhaps he knows that he'd lose to Bob in any match of nerves and wit, and so chose not to mention him in the hope that he could avoid Bob's response. At least in this instance the Professor seems to be very aware of his own self-interest.

The Professor, like other anti-individualists (anarchist or not) can't even conceive of the possibility that one can be an egoist and have collectivist/communist tendencies. For dualists and rationalists, two such "opposites" can't be present in the same person at the same time. Their world is based on exclusive polarities and the competition of philosophies; it's this competition that feeds their fetishization of rationality. They figure that if their own positions and

analyses can be shown to be more rational, then their audience should be convinced and converted to their cause; their brand should *automatically* attract more adherents.

What the voices of responsible and respectable anarchism don't understand is that rationality is only one particular tool used within a larger framework of critical thought. It's not an end in itself, but an ideological construct, like "technology," "society," "the common good."

The ideological position of anti-individualism can't possibly provide an explanation for the actions of individualists who have engaged in revolutionary actions, so they are ignored. There was Lev Chernyi, the Russian anarchist-individualist who became secretary of the Underground Anarchists during the Russian Revolution (he was framed and murdered by the Cheka). There were both Erich Mühsam (murdered by the Nazis) and Ret Marut (later known as B. Traven), who joined the Munich Council Republic in 1919. Plenty more were and are involved in various upheavals and revolts against capitalism and the state. It would be facile and false to say that they aren't *really* individualists, that they exemplify some sort of "unbridgeable chasm" between their theory and practice. More deceit from the Dean.

Anti-individualists can't imagine that an individualist could be anything other than what they themselves are: *self-centered*. This isn't "Stirnerite" egoism (a philosophy that puts the individual—the self and others—in the central place of value), it's *egotism* (where the individual is seen as living in inexorable competition with other atomized individuals), the true legacy of bourgeois individualism. For *egotists* like Dean Bookchin it's impossible to believe that an individualist could ever cooperate with *anyone*, since he himself is invested in his ideas and the prestige that accompanies his celebrity to such an extent that compromise is impossible. This is what makes him and others like him into authoritarians.

The egoist who is clear in her outlook will recognize very quickly that more benefits accumulate when he chooses to cooperate with others, to give and take, to *play*. She understands that her own autonomy is bolstered by the autonomy of others, and he knows that authentic alliances, like real communication, can only take place among equals. She understands *viscerally* that cooperation isn't the same thing as defeat.

It's authoritarian and sectarian anarchists like Professor Bookchin who are more troubled than egoists by the possible contradictions and tensions between individualism and social action (another false polarity); it taxes their hold on rationality, strict philosophical coherence, and their intense attachment to dualism.

By writing this misleading and dishonest polemic Dean Murray Bookchin, true to the characteristics of the shrill anti-individualist whose ego relies on ideological certitude for its meager self-satisfaction, is doing precisely what he accuses his opponents of doing: ruining "his" "movement." Instead of trying to use his celebrity as a rallying point for the growth and strength (which would necessarily entail a certain flexibility) among the various tendencies of American anti-authoritarians he presents himself as a patronizing ideological bully who will only provoke defensive antipathy and further alienation.

Zerzan & the Media

By John Zerzan

An Ignominius Tale

April 30 was a Saturday. It was raining in Eugene. What a surprise. The phone rang and I thought, what an obvious way to have succumbed to technology. Interrupting my usual wake-up of coffee and toast, I walked over and picked it up.

Voice claimed it was Ken Noble, Los Angeles bureau chief of *The New York Times*. Wanted to talk about Unabomber as in where do such ideas come from. I showed some interest in the topic and he said he'd get a flight and be over that evening.

Anyway, such was the opening to my Warholian ten minutes of fame, for which the reviews have been mixed. Just before this encounter, I'd been struck by the few lines I'd read that supposedly were at the heart of Unabomber's "anarchist" critique, namely his(?) desire for the erasure of industrial society in favor of radically decentralized modes of living. It was initially rather stunning to realize that in effect, everyone was hearing, at least minimally, what had heretofore been completely blocked from public awareness. The mere fact of this "mass breakthrough" of sorts, in the absence of any further information (concerning Unabomber's 35,000 word treatise, most notably), was of major significance to me, as well as raising several questions along the way.

Certainly, and explicitly, Unabomber's lethal strikes were the reason for the *Times*' interest in me. Ken Noble's call came just a week or so after the death by package bomb of a top PR exec in charge of propaganda supporting the clear cutting of forests.

Predating this knowledge by a few decades is my awareness of the essential function of media. It is twofold: to maintain the general level of obliviousness created by more fundamental institutions like work and school, and to assist the circulation of commodities via advertising and other commercial information. It can be argued that Unabomber's acts of violence, especially as mediated by the nightly news, lend themselves to the stupefying role that media play.

In the familiar Debordian construction, the "society of the spectacle" is that in which

life as lived gives way to life as represented. The images of Unabomber's vengeance are thus "spectacular," that is, objects of passive consumption or entertainment and hence part of the overall social confinement.

However, it is harder to see the accompanying critique, if I understand it correctly, as just an image that serves media and its values and interests. There may be a curious minor irony, by the way, in the fact that it is

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journalists who have brought out the radical kernel of Unabomber's ideas. (This would be especially ironic if it turns out that some of us have assumed a greater radical lucidity for his ideas than they actually possess.)

But I digress. Mindful of media's basic functions, I met with the *Times*' Noble, as agreed, and did so out of a desire to situate, amplify, and if possible, deepen the critique of industrial society raised by Unabomber. I thought at the time, and still think, that to have declined to make use of the public space that had been opened would have been a failure on my part.

A few surprises were in store when the article appeared eight days later, on Sunday, May 8, 1995. For one thing, it had not occurred to me that the piece would take the form it did. The five column article, headlined "Prominent Anarchist Finds Ally in Serial Bomber," was cast as a profile of me, as much as a discussion of the whys and wherefores of a critique of industrial civilization. I suppose it should have come as no surprise that the press would rely, once again, on the manufacture of a spectacular image. By this justifying logic I was cast not only as "prominent," but also as something of a "guru," even an "idol," to those in radical, anti-tech circles. To tailor this image even further, I became a shadowy figure, "rumped" and ascetic, as befits, I suppose, the popular idea of a bearer of misfit ideas.

The piece was carried by other papers all

over the country, and provoked angry reactions from some of them. The May 14 Omaha *Sunday World Herald's* lead editorial, "Technophobia Taken to an Extreme," thundered against the sudden emergence of "cockamamie notions about modern technology"; an extreme fit of pique over a critique and an individual they had almost certainly never encountered until a few days before.

The next surprise was the huge amount of attention the *Times* article immediately engendered from other media, including television, talk radio, book publishers, and other newspaper reporters. Without having to consult more abstract criteria, it was fairly easy to reject the requests for TV appearances (e.g., "Good Morning America," "Dateline") due to the lack of time available for a minimally coherent presentation, and their unsuitability for anything approaching a serious context. But I did participate in half a dozen talk radio programs by telephone, mainly out of New York City.

Interrupted by commercials, and carried, obviously, via modern technology, radio programming involved major contradictions for me. I felt that these realities were possibly outweighed by the opportunity for dialogue, especially in the case of a one-or two-hour format.

I decided in advance to try to discuss outlines of a critique of civilization itself, ranging from the anthropological to the contemporary. I also found myself dealing with other basics, such as anarchist theory (including the fact that not all anarchists oppose industrial civilization, much less civilization), and pointing out the absurdity of "gurus" in an anti-authoritarian milieu, after always being introduced as one.

The interactions with callers were generally very lively and stimulating, with almost no interest shown in speculation about Unabomber. Presumably, Unabomber would have been as pleased as I was to learn how eager callers were to discuss the pros and cons of drastic social alternatives, instead of fixating on his public persona.

Certainly, these radio encounters were not without irony; in one instance, the host on WABC (Rush Limbaugh's home station) interrupted the dialogue with his own monologue, going on at some length, in one of the few references to Unabomber, about how violence simply never achieves anything. I pointed out the transparent fact that this discussion would not be taking place except for Unabomber's violence—sudden shift to a commercial!

Yet another development that I should have anticipated, but didn't, was the negative reaction to my collaboration with the media from the radical anti-tech milieu. I began to get wind of this fairly early on, receiving a

bit of vaguely articulated, but unmistakable opposition. Feeling a little hurt, I fired off an "open letter" of sorts to two dozen people in the milieu, challenging possible nay-sayers to state their views. I hoped to bring us all further along through an exchange, but my effort fizzled; I got only a couple of responses. This article is a more public second effort.

So far, the objections fall into two main categories. The first asserts that drawing publicity to radical ideas only assists the authorities in repressing the more visible radical proponents and projects. In my opinion, this just doesn't merit serious discussion.

The second objection, less weak, relates to media's role in spectacular society. It is evil and unclean, the argument runs, to have any dealings with mainstream media, on principle. But as Neal Keating points out, "the only way to avoid the media is by insulating yourself, forming some kind of specialized

sub-elite, replete with publications."

We know that media are complicit, part of the ensemble of modern domination; we are aware of the deformations that make up media's usual content. But if our movement is going anywhere, it is extremely unlikely that we could avoid media attention even if we wanted to. Keating suggests that it would be self-marginalizing to have no input, and the point, as I understand it, is contact and dialogue with all of our fellow inmates.

It is noteworthy that the critique is unevenly diffused. A number of articles have appeared in popular publications (e.g., "E Pluribus Unabomber," *The New Yorker*, August 15) noting that Unabomber's antipathy to the present industrial order finds considerable resonance in American society. Similarly, Kirkpatrick Sale's *Resisting the Future* has made a large impact this year with its neo-Luddite call for the overthrow of industrialism.

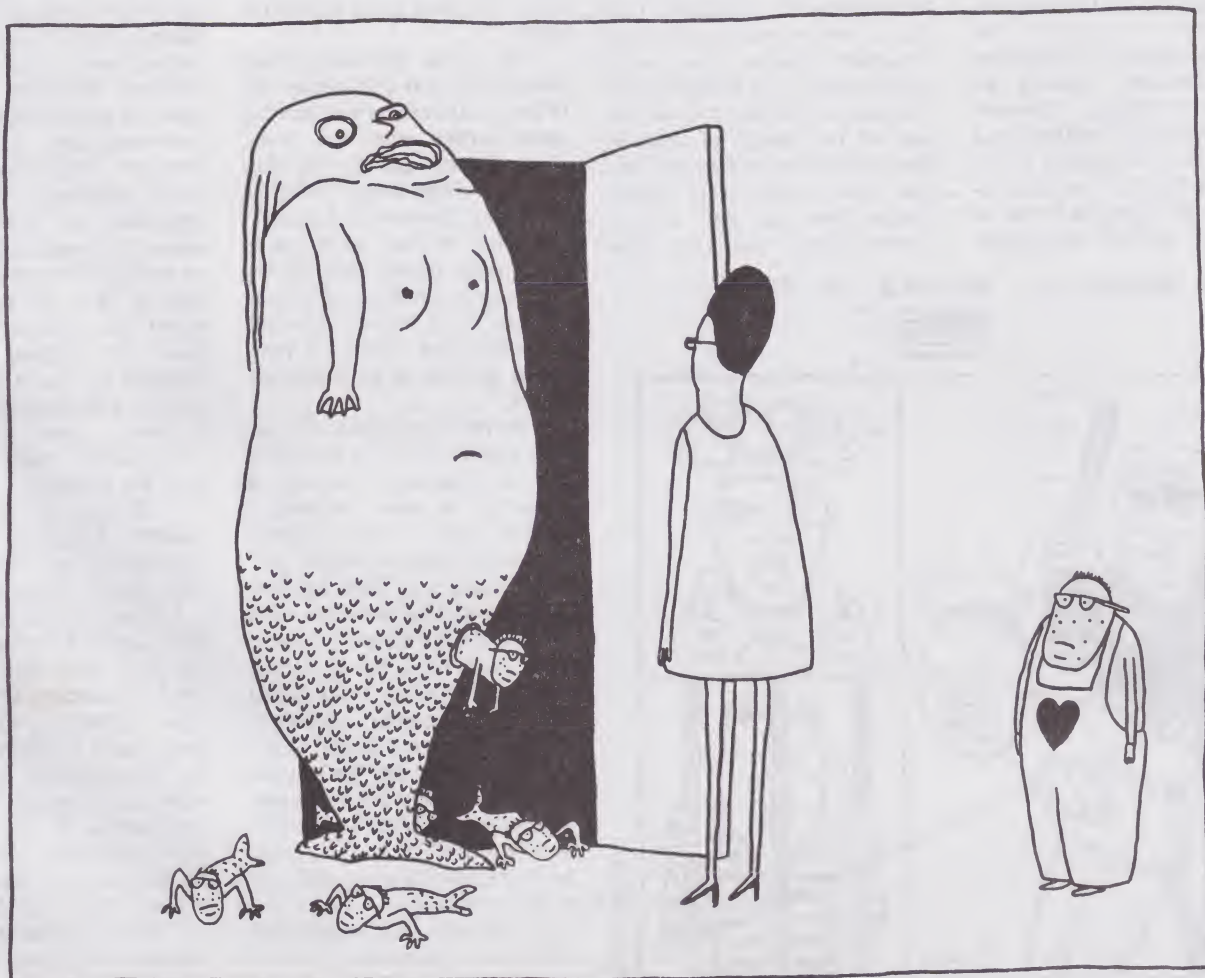
Meanwhile, *Anarchy* and *Fifth Estate*, our own leading publications, now appear only once or twice a year, and in the pages of the latter's latest issue it was depressing to find two letters to the editor, by supposed anarchists, advocating the ballot.

I happen to be as involved as I have ever been with our media, with *FE* and *Anarchy*, and with other quality periodicals such as *Extraphile* and *Kaspahraster*. I am definitely not advocating switching to the mainstream. But maybe my particular experience with the media can give us all an excuse to pause and consider how to proceed in the context of a failing dominant culture.

Are we serious about mounting a real challenge to all that is? For some of us this is not a game. By taking thought now, we can be better prepared for openings to come.

To communicate directly with the author, write to: John Zerzan, 868 W. 4th, Eugene OR 97402.

Mrs. Smelt was there to kill Billy for masturbating so much into the sewage system and breaking up her marriage.



Have something to say? Write us!

We would like to encourage you to write us in order to continue this dialogue, whether you are sympathetic or critical of anarchist theories and practices. All letters will be printed with the author's initials only, unless it is specifically stated that her/his full name may be used or that s/he wishes to remain anonymous, or the name already appears in *Anarchy*—as in the case of an author of an essay or creator of artwork published here.

We will edit letters that are redundant, overly long, unreadable, excessively boring or contain death threats. (Ellipses in italicized brackets [...] indicate editorial omissions.) Limit length to three double-spaced, typewritten pages. Address your letters to C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO 65205-1446, USA.

Contra Black

Dear Editor:

It was a supreme sense of amusement that I read Bob Black's letter in the Winter '95 issue of *Anarchy* calling upon the journal to "expose" me, a project he himself thereupon undertakes, ostensibly in the name of "truth" and "accuracy." The resulting hodgepodge of disinformation amounts nothing so much as a glaring reflection upon its author, his methods and motives, and the quality of his supposedly "factual" pronouncements. I will highlight a few of the more blatant falsehoods

offered up in his brief missive, and comment upon certain of their implications.

* "Churchill," Black states, while attempting to negate my identity, "is not enrolled in any tribe." In actuality, I am an enrolled Keetoowah Band Cherokee (Roll No. 7627). It should be self-evident, however, that this is neither what makes me American Indian nor what would make me a non-Indian if I lacked it. Rather, it is an aspect of the system of colonial domination imposed by the federal government upon native people from the 19th century onward. Black's insistence upon

enrollment as the signifier of Indian identity aligns him squarely with federal authority, an interesting posture for this self-proclaimed benchmark of anarchist purity to assume.

* Black makes much of my blood quantum ("degree of Indian blood"), asserting that it is "far less than many millions" of others in the United States. Where, exactly, he gets the data upon which to base such a statement is left entirely mysterious. In any event, my actual quantum, as recorded by Keetoowah genealogists, is double that upon which Black offers his conclusion, and may be as much as quadruple (my father's family line is cloudy). Whatever. The real point at hand, however, is that the blood quantum system, another 19th-century federal contrivance, is as explicitly racist a mechanism as is possible to conceive. Black's fervent embrace of it once again speaks for itself.

* By what definition Black determined that the factory city of Peoria, Illinois, or the farming towns farther west and south, where I grew up, are—or ever were—"college towns" is left a bit murky. Moreover, it is a bit less than evident what would have been wrong with having grown up in a college town, even if I had. Black himself, after all, has spent more than a few years of his own life in such environments.

* By the same token, I'm not sure exactly when the university city of Boulder, Colorado, is supposed to have become a "resort town"—one suspects that, with his usual level of geographic accuracy, Black has confused it with Vail or Aspen—but I've not lived within its confines since 1980. As to the two years prior to that when I did in fact live in a Boulder apartment complex, perhaps Black would like to compare my "sin" in this respect to his own extended stint in Berkeley, California (a locality in which he'd likely still reside, had local anarchists not sent him packing years ago).

* What the fuck would Bob Black know about the nature of

my spiritual practices, or lack of them? And why on earth would somebody need to be a practitioner of traditional spirituality in order to oppose its commercialization and appropriation by New Agers and a battery of hucksters. With no commentary at all upon my own relative spiritual "purity," I've called upon everyone to engage in such opposition.

* Contra Black, I do hold a doctorate, *honoris causa*, from Alfred University. The real question, however, is not whether or not I possess such a degree. Rather it is under which principle of anarchy does Bob Black elect to join the gate-keeping ranks of the existing academic status quo, arbitrarily demanding such a ticket-punch as the price of admission to the professorate?

* I'm unsure how my dozen books and more than 200 journal articles, only half-a-dozen of them in *New Studies on the Left*, end up being a mere "few publications." Similarly, I'm unsure how the broad range of publishers—extending from *Anarchy* through HarperCollins—under whose imprimatur my work has appeared are "almost all" assigned the status of being "leftist or racist." Perhaps Black would like to be a bit more explicit about the criteria he uses as basis for slinging such mud. Perhaps he would also care to publish a bibliography he would consider more hefty and "respectable" than mine: His own, for example.

* Suffice it to say that Annette Jaimes is neither my "girl friend" nor "the editor" of *New Studies on the Left*.

* How, precisely, individuals like Carole Standing Elk, who has lived more than 30 years in the San Francisco Bay Area, and Clyde Bellecourt, who has lived even longer in Minneapolis, can be characterized as anything other than "urban" boggles the imagination. To imply, as Black does toward the end of his letter, that they are based on reservations, enters into the sublime.

* Black's reliance upon the opinions of *Lakota Times* (now

THE STARS AND STRIPES OF AMERICA



Indian Country Today) publisher Tim Giago is again revealing. Either he is ignorant of the fact that Giago has long served as a primary anti-AIM propagandist—notably, Giago has served as the government's main "Indian" apologist for the FBI campaign to destroy AIM during the 1970s—or he actually shares Giago's openly neofascist values and perspective. The latter possibility, of course, would conform well with Black's already-mentioned adoption of federal "standards" concerning Indian identity, as well as his apparent affinity with AIM defectors like Bellecourt and Standing Elk, people whose "virtues" Giago himself has lately and increasingly taken to extolling.

* Black claims AIM has "only 5,000 members nationwide." One might ask where he came up with this interesting number. More to the point, however—since he uses the figure to suggest AIM is therefore unrepresentative of native interests—one should inquire how many folks Black can reasonably count as subscribing to his own weird little viewpoint to the point of trying to act upon it. Case closed.

Again, where Black gets his 2 million figure with regard to the overall native population in the U.S. is both unstated and direct contradiction to his earlier assertion that there are "millions" of others with more "Indian blood" than I. Moreover, he misleadingly suggests that all 2 million are reservation-based—in contrast to me—while the very federal census data from which he quietly took his number shows that more than half reside in cities.

* Black asserts that, in my essay "I Am Indigenist," I call for the establishment of an American Indian "State" in what is now the western U.S. I here-upon challenge him to offer one single direct quote from the essay into evidence to support this assertion. While I may be a nationalist in the peculiar sense I define as "indigenist," I am no statist by any definition (opposition to statist impositions is a cornerstone of indigenist thought

and action). If Black is unable at this point in his intellectual development to discern the distinction, maybe he should submit himself for some rudimentary instruction on the matter. If he does understand the difference, then he is, as usual, being deliberately deceptive.

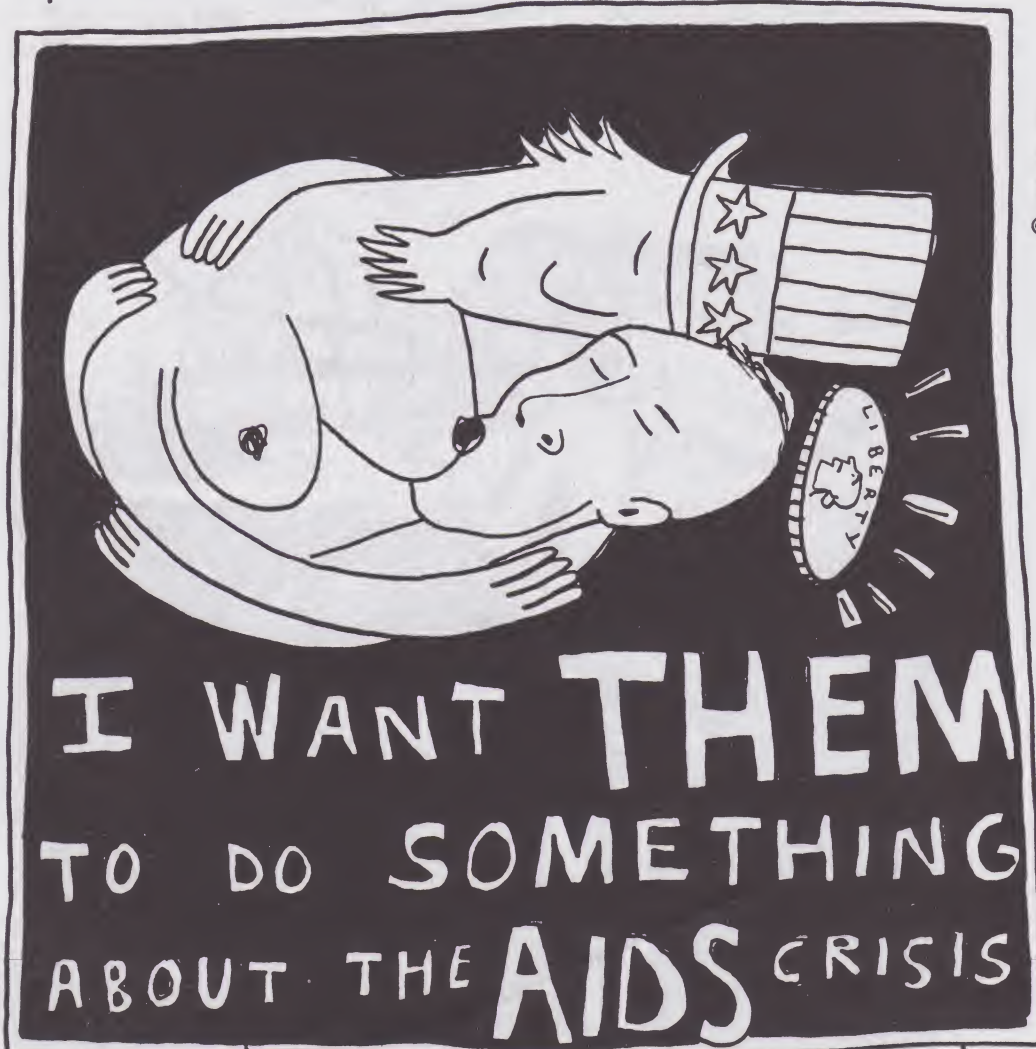
* Either Black fails to understand the meaning of the term "genocide"—in which case he'd

do well to learn it—or he deliberately blurs it in much the same manner as Jeffrey Hart, William F. Buckley, and other reactionary publicists. Actually, his position is far worse than that, coming very close to an outright embrace of genocide against anyone other than those with his own pigmentation, but I'll let that one ride for a while.

* In going on and on about

my "plan," supposedly advanced in "I Am Indigenist," to deport millions of non-Indians from my new Indian "State," Black completely ignores the fact that my argument actually went to the need for radical population reduction (not just moving people around) over the next few generations. The result is exactly what he intended: a grotesque misrepresentation of my position.

Legislative
pornography



©1996 Mr. Fish

Letters

Meanwhile, if my ideas in this respect outrage him so much, the thinking of people like John Zerzan ought to really drive him into a frenzy.

* In another misrepresentation, Black states that I "believe modern humans originated in the Americas." Well, I've never said that, and don't necessarily believe it. What I have said—and do believe—is that the available evidence suggests that this point of origin is as plausible as any other. No more, no less.

* Black makes reference to my "column" in "the October issue of *Z Magazine*." This is most curious, given that I pub-

lished nothing at all in the October issue of *Z* (for that matter, I've published nothing therein for well over a year). Perhaps this is simply an example of Black's vaunted "scholarly" attention to detail.

* As the figurative frosting on the cake, Black couldn't even get Toni Otter's gender right. At least I think it was an error; leaving aside the possibility that Black intended some sort of locker room sexist slur, males are not typically referred to as "she" in conventional discourse.

I suppose I could continue with this itemization, but why bother? It should be obvious that Black had nothing to say

that he wasn't compelled to invent or distort beyond recognition. The only remaining problematic resides in his motivation in spewing out such trash.

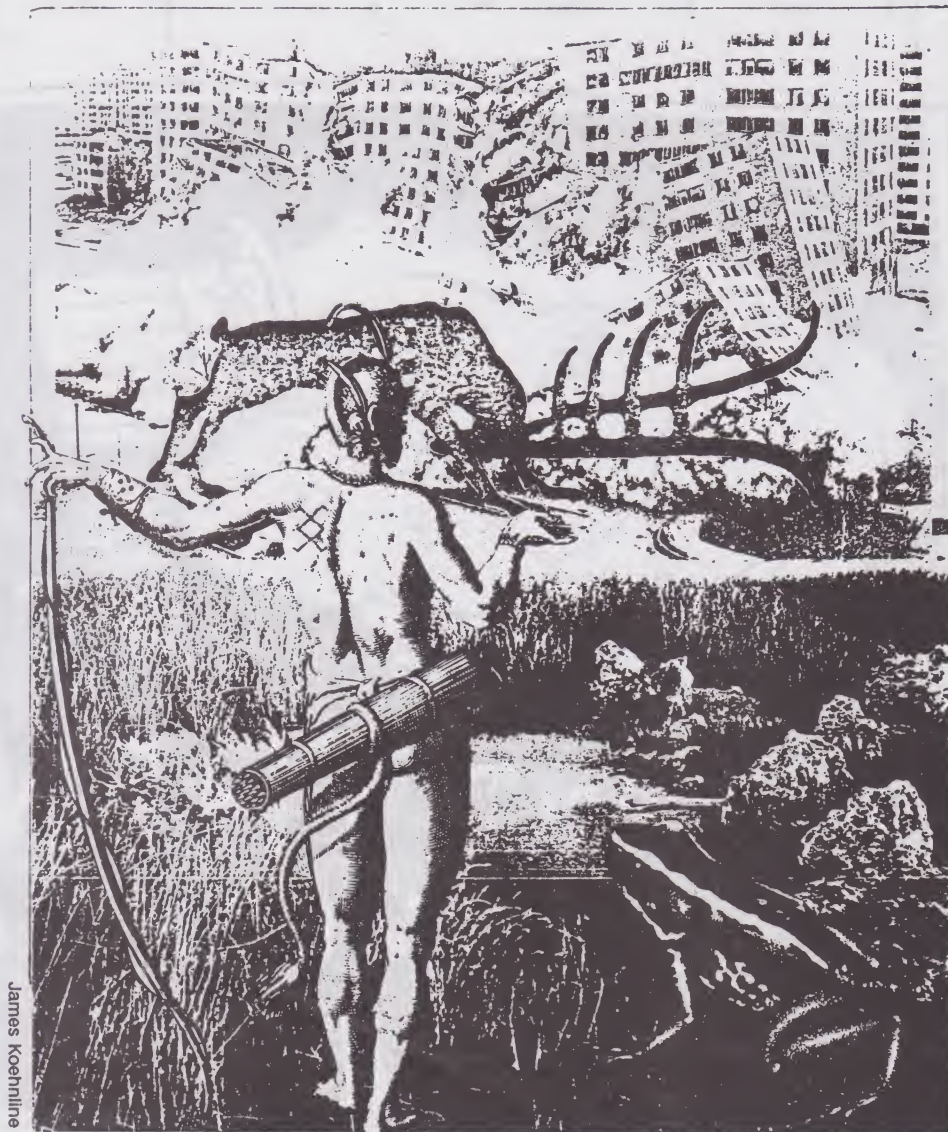
His own version sounds noble enough, even if a bit paternalistic: Black's self-assigned mission is to prevent *Anarchy* readers from being deceived by my "misrepresentations" and/or taken in by my subtly "racist" postulations. Yet, how plausible can this be coming from a man who habitually opens his correspondence to me with "Dear Taunto" or "Dear Shitting Bull," and who—as a matter of judicial record—has extended his own misrepresentations to the point

of printing a false endorsement from former IWW official Jon Bekken on the cover of his silly little "book," *Friendly Fire*?

Allow me to suggest an alternative and rather more squalid explanation of Black's performance, drawn from some of the more candid passages in his correspondence (which I've duly retained on file, Bob). Black is, in his own words, "extremely jealous" of my ability to land a tenured university faculty position. He himself has been seeking one—that's right, boys and girls, Bob "Anti-Work" Black, champion of classlessness, has been actively, even desperately, trying to get himself a permanent "elite" job for years—so that, again in his own words, he can "enjoy the advantages of a regular paycheck and easy access to coed pussy (!!!)." The same principle extends to both my public speaking, publishing and related activities; Black—as he's admitted straight out and repeatedly—would love nothing more than to trade places.

But he can't. He can't because, at base, he is what he's accused me and so many others of being over the years: A Fraud. Black is no anarchist: he is a failed lawyer, a Boldt Hall reject who appropriated the trappings of visionary social iconoclast as a cover for his deep-seated sense of personal inadequacy. Rhetoric notwithstanding, Black is no militant: even in his own accounts, offered in *Friendly Fire*, his most courageous physical act against the State he professes to despise so much seems to have been taking down yellow ribbons along an Albany street during the Gulf War (this is as opposed to the kind of treatment he is reputed to have meted out to younger/smaller anarchists in the Bay Area a few years back).

Black isn't even a principled and consistent opponent of the federal government on safer and more abstract grounds; instead, as is witnessed above, he avidly embraces even the most arcane and reactionary federal policies whenever it suits the pettiest of his purposes, sucks around seek-



James Koehnline

ing employment from it, and scurries under the mantle of the First Amendment for protection from Bekken. Viewed in the light of his actual practice, Black's whole "superior" rap dissolves into little more than one long whine.

Why would anyone wish to hire this pathetic package? Answer: they wouldn't. And you can't blame them. The man is a blatant liar and incompetent, patently psychotic, an individual whose private prose often interchanges rather well with that of Bruce Pierce, triggerman for The Order, now doing life in Marion (Pierce is another who sends me hate letters which I retain on file; good intellectual company you keep, Bob). Any reasonable university hiring authority would have to conclude, all things considered, that not only would Black have nothing of substance or coherence to offer students, but that he'd be uncomfortably prone to ending up in a bell tower sniping at them before all was said and done. Better to leave him alone in his room with his typewriter and his gun, so that maybe he'd only blow his own brains out before hurting someone else.

To conclude, I will improvise upon the theme with which Black closed his own missive: I never said you were a cop, Bob. Provocateurs like yourself are unemployably demented, even by police standards. Now, wander back over in your corner and continue jerking off.

Solidarity,
Ward Churchill
Boulder, CO

Critique of egoism

Dear anarchoids,

The supreme categorical imperative of our time, as of all commodity times, is the abolition of separation. The critique of separation remains fluid and dynamic in a world of placeholders and variables. This is how it remains something outside of science. We do not need sciences to be rational. Motion, as shown by Zeno's arrow paradox, is contradictory and all

basic physics is built on motion. Mathematicians in a recent issue of *Scientific American* think they've solved the problem for all time. But naturally that is a bourgeois illusion because our interests dictate what is our knowledge and our interests are not in the form of life known as Western civilization. Destroy the show. Complete revolution is the only way out, kids. Otherwise, "FILL IT FAST, SUCKER."

Having made my revolutionary project clear to you, I hope you will pay attention to my critique of the "Individualism" issue.

All egoism is a waste of time. All abstract interests remain partial, hence, unreal. What counts is the human interest. If we are to remain true to ourselves, we must remain true to there we have come from. This explains why egoism is a waste of time: it lacks a category of totality and the modality that can be derived from it. By making all interests mine, I must do as I please. A fistful of might is superior to a bagful of right because we can get what we want with the might. I might suggest that such a morality is the kind that interested such happy rightists as Adolf Hitler and Ayn Rand. They do not look at the possible hidden by the permitted but merely stare blankly ahead at the idiocies that the permitted has set up for them. Keeping this in mind, we can turn to the text of the issue in hand.

Regarding *La Bibliothèque des émeutes* article: They do not debate any major points against the altruist. Rather, like Vaneigem, they seek the other in the individual. Vaneigem had the rather primitive vocabulary of Hegel in his book, but we can state his point metaphysically, without the waste of time that is the projection game. (I think you desire me and this turns me on, but you don't want to get laid or at least not right now.) Using the vocabulary of deconstruction, we can point to the irrecoverable loss of subjectivity, the necessity of a past that was never present but makes presence possible. Bearing this in

mind we can see the raw sociality that is the individual, erasing all egoism. Instead what we have is the utterly irrational loss of the potlatch (that's a Hegelianism without reserve, for all you readers of Bataille). Returning to the *Émeutes* article, we can legitimately ask why they spend so much time on Stirner, when all we have to do is point out that in a culture founded on a false praxis, we will find only more death in individuals, including those individuals who seek to wipe out praxis through mere thought. Stirner, like modern-day postmodernists, merely says, "Philosophers have changed the world in various ways; the task, however, is to interpret it." If you are going to abolish ideology you must wipe out thought that is dishonest to praxis. Kill separate thought.

Regarding the excerpts from *The Right to Be Greedy*: rare indeed is it that one has the privilege to read such sappy, self-contradictory sophistry. Bob Black, a coauthor, once commented that his friends in this project couldn't keep to the ideology of this pamphlet. (Whereas Black, a lawyer, I take it, has.) They preach against morality ("we have no morality" [p. 30]), preach against antimorality (which they attribute to situationists), but, since they make such claims as "the other person is a part of your wealth" (p. 29), we can see that they are shameless moralists, in fact the worst variety—bourgeois moralists. This can be seen in their paean to use-value in Section 105. We can see that the egoists are playing the game of morality by giving grounds or validity claims for their activity. To be an egoist requires that I pay morality no mind. The egoist is an individual, but behind the individual lies almost nothing: sociality. It is amazing to see this claim denied. Our anarchists like to play the role of depth-psychologists, trying to point out that at some level everybody acts out of self-interest. However, it is also true that at some level the organization of the planets can be read as a message from

God explained computationally, as the Goodman paradox shows. There is no depth grammar to the language game. All there is is surfaces.

As for Feral Faun: you reject species being at risk of becoming a specious (redundant) being.

Sincerely,
Geoff Tozer
Pointe-Claire, Quebec

Tad responds

Indeed, there is no depth to the language game, only surfaces, and I'm having difficulty penetrating yours. Your critique of the "self-contradictory sophistry" of *The Right to Be Greedy* smacks of the self-contradiction you accuse the authors of. What is your point? For Ourselves's outlining of the reasoning of their critique should not be misinterpreted as an attempt at moral justification... The statement "I walked into a door" (after having walked into a door) would only be read as a moral justification for door-walking by those with a pre-fixed interpretive agenda. This seems to be the manner in which you have understood the excerpts from the text.

The passage you mention from *The Right To Be Greedy* regarding anti-morality becoming moralism deflates your argument of self-contradiction via its self-consciousness, its negation of "thought that is dishonest to praxis". It is an anti-moralist warning against the moralism of an anti-moralist ideology that challenges all for the sake of challenge, and it applies just as much to their warning as to that which they warn against. The authors were aware of this (otherwise they wouldn't have written it). Their critique of ideological antimoralism comes not from a moralist position, but rather from a "revolutionary" one—stating that an ideological anti-moralism is not a break from the subjectivity-destroying circle of pre-made choices; the paralysis of ideology. A sophist of the freshman philosophy major type could smirkingly argue that all "revolutionaries" seeking to avoid the moralist trap or challenge existing order do so from some hidden (or overt—as is the case with so many leftists)

moralism. This argument can be held up against itself—like two mirrors—ad infinitum. Awareness destroys paradox, though, especially if that awareness is part of one's praxis. The authors of *The Right To Be Greedy* attempt such an integration. Your misreading of the nature of their awareness allows you to straight-facedly postulate that said awareness indicates self-contradiction. Yeah, yeah, anti-ideologues can become ideologues. Anti-anti-ideologues can become ideologues. Anti-anti-anti-ideologues can become ideologues. So what? Such circular reasoning is for the entertainment of "sophists" and has no bearing on the validity of an idea. (As for those responsible for *The Right To Be Greedy*, Bob Black was not a co-author. He wrote the preface which appears in the Loompanics edition. Whether or not Black is an attorney has no bearing on his ability to live according to the dictates of his desires. In his preface he mentions that members of For Ourselves slipped back into the left-Marxism they'd never truly escaped. He may be an attorney, but at least Black's not a Marxist.)

Your "pre-fixed interpretive agenda," mentioned above, is that of an unabashed moralist. You accused For Ourselves of self-contradiction in decrying moralist ideology because, trapped in its throes yourself and convinced of its validity, escape is impossible, resistance is futile, moralism is "the human interest," "remain(ing) true to ourselves." You misinterpret the goal of "making all interests mine" as the goal of the capitalist, the accruer of "wealth" (the use of which word you later point out as evidence of For Ourselves's "bourgeois moralism"). This sounds like a leftist making the old arguments against "bourgeois individualism"—from a moralist stance, stating that "making all interests mine" is the ideology of "might makes right"—an ideology you find immoral. This is a transparent mistake commonly made by leftist moralists in their critique of "egoism," confusing the anti-communal, capitalist individualism of Ayn Rand (or Hitler!?) with the collective *individuality* of Stirner or

For Ourselves (see the chapter of *The Revolution of Everyday Life* reprinted this issue for more on this) and evidences only a cursory reading (or an intentional misreading) of the texts involved. Each person I come into contact with is a part of me, and their interests are my interests. The more free they become, the freer I become. I do not become freer at their expense. This is the major difference between the extremes.

You identify your revolutionary project as the abolition of separation, of alienation. Such is the goal of For Ourselves, and their reading of Stirner via Marx is not such a bad place to start. Moralism, however, serves only to preserve the alienated social modalities and barriers between individuals—the separations that allow us to see others as "the other." For Ourselves decry such moralism, the act of which you moralistically see as moralist. "Bourgeois" no less. You speak of egoism as an "abstract interest," and that "what counts is the human interest"; an abstraction if there ever was one. You interpret the "human interest" through the filter of your interests—as do we all—therefore evidencing your egoism. *Humans are already separate individuals, moralism accentuates and exacerbates that separation. Base "egoism" is the self-interest of the capitalist. Communal egoism is seen as the individually subjective self-interest of members of the egoist collective, a self-interest that is conscious of its relations with—and interests of—the collective. The dictates of moralism and ideology are seen as the negations of the ego; of the common self-interest of this collective of individuals. They are the externally imposed pathologies of a nightmare society. We'll always see through our eyes. Moralism forces us to see through the eyes of others, not in an empathic sense, but through the eyes of an external will. It is the difference between looking at yourself through other's eyes or looking at others through their eyes. By being individuals—egoists—together, by finding the common ground denied us by ideology and moralism, by realizing my desires by helping you*

realize yours, the codes of alienation, the chains on our desires, can be broken.

Homo Anarchist

Dear *Anarchy*,

I am an 18-year-old homo anarchist living in a small, backwoods, southern Baptist community. You are a main source of any worthwhile information I get. I just wanted to thank you. Enclosed is enough for a U.S. subscription and a small token of my appreciation. I'm also looking for correspondence, so people write me.

Lifelong love and gratitude,

Eric Phillips

P.O. Box 684

Live Oak, FL 32060

Misconceptions of Makhno

Hello, everyone.

I'm writing to correct a misconception that appeared in "I am Naked Child's" letter in *Anarchy* #37 (p.76). The letter refers to Nestor Makhno, the Ukrainian anarchist, in the following quote: "As the anarchist historian Voline related in his *The Unknown Revolution*, Makhno had so dehumanized the enemy that 'their' women were gang raped by the guerilla and his men." To begin with, what Voline actually said on page 705 of *The Unknown Revolution* was: "Especially when drunk, these men let themselves indulge in shameful and odious activities, going as far as orgies in which certain women were forced to participate." Voline's accusation that gang rapes occurred in the Makhnovist movement is the only one that has ever appeared in anarchist literature. Voline's remarks are vague; he never cites a source for his very serious allegations or mentions a specific incident. Nor does he say, "I saw this," etc. This is in contrast to the rest of his book, which is well documented. Voline waited until after Makhno's death to make these accusations; during Makhno's lifetime they would have been immediately and publicly refuted.

ed. A few comments are in order.

1. The Makhnovist army was a revolutionary guerrilla army operating in a country, the Ukraine, which was torn apart by revolution and civil war. All members of this guerrilla force were subject to a consensual but strict military discipline. They had to be; casualty rates for partisan armies tend to run around 75 percent, but the Makhnovists suffered 90 percent casualties in a little over two years, which gives an idea of how intense the fighting was. In the Makhnovist army the drinking of alcohol was forbidden. This was not a question of morality, but a strict necessity if the army was to survive. The Makhnovists were either constantly on the move or expecting to be attacked by greatly superior military forces 24 hours a day. One slip like a drinking party would have been fatal for everyone in the army and by extension fatal for the whole Makhnovist movement. The no drinking policy was rigorously applied. At Berchiansk, the Makhnovists came upon a distillery with many casks of liquor. Makhno ordered them broken open immediately and poured into the snow. The whole social and political context of the Makhnovist movement makes Voline's charges of violent, drunken orgies appear absurd.

2. During his term in Butyrki prison (he was first sentenced to death and then to a life term for attempting to kill a police official), Makhno contracted the tuberculosis that lasted his whole life and finally killed him. Makhno's health did not permit him to get drunk. Many anarchist friends of his, including Bulgarian comrades who knew him from the start of his exile until his death, categorically denied that Makhno abused alcohol.

3. The Makhnovist army never victimized noncombatants. This policy was strictly applied, and Makhno systematically had all marauders and would-be pogromists shot whether they were Makhnovists or not. Apart

from actual combat they would kill oppressors such as big landowners, bourgeois and White and some Bolshevik officers. They spared captured troops. Any unnecessary brutality would have openly contradicted the revolutionary practice that was the essence of the movement; also, the Makhnovist movement was totally dependent on the peasants and workers for supplies and vital intelligence. Abuse of civilians would have compromised the Makhnovists militarily and politically, and alienated their base of support.

4. Makhnovist women played prominent roles in the movement and exercised real power in it. For example, Galina Kuzmenko, Makhno's wife, sat on the Revolutionary Council, worked for the Makhnovist intelligence service and shot rifles and machine guns well. Neither she nor they would have tolerated the rape or abuse of women prisoners. The only recorded instance of a Makhnovist ever raping anyone is that of Pouzanov, a Makhnovist commander who raped a nurse. He was immediately brought before an insurrectional tribunal, found guilty, and stripped of his rank. Makhno insisted that he be shot but was overruled, and the man was sent to the front lines where he was killed in combat.

5. In her *Recollections of Nestor Makhno*, Ida Mett wrote: "In his book Voline tells the same tall stories [about 'orgies']. In reality Makhno was a virginal or rather pure man. As for his relations with women, I would say that he combined a kind of peasant simplicity and a respect for women characteristic of Russian revolutionary milieus of the turn of the century." In the same article, she added: "Was Makhno a drunkard, as Voline described him? I don't think so. During three years in Paris I never saw him drunk." In a review of Voline's book published in 1948, she noted, "To conclude, the author, bringing his objectivity and impartiality to a peak, launches into descriptions of Makhno's negative personal characteristics, and this inelegant

'impartiality' bears a striking resemblance to a posthumous personal vengeance."

6. Alexandre Skirda, in his book *Les Cosaques de la liberté* (which should be translated and published; any takers?) states that Makhno, an activist, had little respect for Voline, an intellectual; he did not like him, "considering him a man of no worth and no character. Voline apparently looked down on Makhno as an unlettered peasant and tried to patronizingly give him advice that he didn't want or need during his stay with the Makhnovists. In exile, Voline sided with anarchists who rejected the Arshinov Platform, an organizational proposal that Makhnowholeheartedly supported. Voline's personal bitterness probably clouded his judgment when he wrote the final part of *The Unknown Revolution*."

Makhno actually was what the Russian and Ukrainian revolutions proved he was: a great revolutionary who fought oppression his whole adult life.

Revolution,
Doug Imrie
Montréal, Quebec

Disappointed

Dear Anarchy:

I was disappointed with your most recent issue [#41], largely because I felt it did not live up to its promise as a "Special Issue on Individualism." Though it did contain a few articles dealing with some issues and people related to anarchist individualism, nowhere did it contain a straightforward exposition of what individualist anarchists believe, despite the fact that most of the members of the editorial/production collective, and at least two of the contributing editors are familiar with contemporary American individualist writings.

While the illegalists, Stirner, and, arguably, the For Ourselves folks were/are individualists, the articles dealing with them did not give a coherent explanation of what they thought or how their actions related to individualist theory. And the articles by

Baker and *L'Unique et son ombre*, though mentioning individuals or individualists, gave even less insight into how individualists might differ from non-individualists. After reading these articles, I suspect most readers would not have any firm idea of what individualism means to those who advocate it.

The only article that had any decent discussion of what I would recognize as individualist thought was "Libertarianism: Bogus Anarchy," by Peter Sabatini. In it he gives a very brief overview of the early anarchist individualist movement in the United States, which is all right as far as it goes. However, he perpetuates the myth that the demise of *Liberty* in 1908 was the end of the individualist anarchist movement and school of thought, at least in the United States. It seems unaware that there are any modern advocates of this tradition, despite the fact that contemporary individualist writings have appeared, and or been reviewed, in such "mainstream" anarchist journals as *Anarchy*, *Fifth Estate*, and *Kick It Over* in recent years. Additionally, because this is the only article discussing the American individualists and the author ignores the modern non-capitalist individualists, this article, despite the author's stated intentions to the contrary, tends to conflate the historical individualist anarchist movement with the modern libertarian/anarchist capitalists, who are the real focus of the article. This serves to reinforce the inaccurate perception of many anarchists that all present-day individualists are apologists for capitalism.

I would have been less bothered if I thought the writers and compilers were simply unaware of the modern individualist movement. But, knowing and/or having corresponded with a number of them, I know this not to be the case. At least some people involved in the production of this issue are familiar with the publications and activities of the non-capitalist individualists active in the last two decades, such as members of the

Mackay Society, the Lysander Spooner Society, and the Boston Anarchist Drinking Brigade. In addition, while this issue was being put together, I corresponded with the compilers and supplied them with two recently produced documents about the individualist movement in the United States for consideration for inclusion.

While I respect the freedom of those who produce *Anarchy* to include and publish whatever they wish, I feel that a more explicit discussion of individualist thought and an acknowledgment of the existence of modern anarchist individualists would have made for a more informative issue.

Take care,
Joe Peacott
Boston, MA

Tad responds

I fail to see how you could have perceived that Peter Sabatini's "Libertarianism—Bogus Anarchy" article "reinforced the inaccurate perception [...] that individualists are apologists of capitalism," when the whole basis of the piece was a debunking of wearers of the "Libertarian" label who have tried to pass themselves off as "anarchists" or even "individualist anarchists." Rather than reinforce those misconceptions, I thought the piece did a relatively good job showing where the dividing line lies.

Producing a history of the tendency was not our goal. We sought instead to put together an issue with feature material written from an individualist perspective, not to instruct the readers of *Anarchy* as to its background. There is a wealth of material on this subject, and I can think of several things offhand that would work as feature articles if we were to do another issue on the topic—which we hope to do. Feel free to suggest things.

Ideological preference

Dear Anarchy,

While I generally like much of your magazine and admit its contents have actually much

Letters

affected the way I now view some things, there is one thing about it that I find quite irritating. That is your all-too-often ideological condemnation of some ideologies. Or should I say, it is your condemnation of what you perceive as ideology. In this case, your attitude (or lack of one) toward animal welfare. Or more precisely, your inconsistent attitudes toward animal and human welfare.

Being ideological is adhering to an ideology for its own sake. It's true many are "guilty" of that, but at times an ideology is adhered to not for its own sake but for some other worthwhile purpose. In other words, they aren't just simply carrying out a rule, but rather, in trying to accomplish some end, the rule gets carried out as a result.

The item which induced me to write was R. Curtis's review of *Food Not Bombs* (#39). He seemed to suspect ideology was involved in their attitude toward giving animal-based food to people. I admit, if someone claims to be an ethical vegetarian, that is he objects to the way animals are treated, killed, etc, all for an insufficient reason, then if he found a piece of meat lying in his freezer and refused to eat it (and assuming there is no other reason than "principle") then I would agree that he's being ideological. Another example is one who buys some mainly vegetarian meal, finds a few small pieces of meat and refuses to eat it on ethical grounds. Once again, I feel that's inconsistent. The "damage" is already done by giving the financial support to the thing he objects to. Let's face it, the idea behind his attitude is to not support what he finds to be unfair suffering of animals. Eating that last remaining steak would really have no bearing on his "cause." Likewise, if you gave that last piece of steak to a hungry person. If that is indeed the attitude of R. Curtis then I am misinterpreting him and therefore we are in agreement.

However, I get a distinct impression many of you people have an ideological preference

for helping humans over animals. If the reason for this is because in pushing help for people you yourself will benefit, then that is a selfish reason (which I have no problem with, despite the negative connotation of the word). However, it seems to me that the reason is the attitude that it is more "worthy" or "important" to be concerned with human welfare than with animal welfare.

I have no problem with someone who has no concern for animals or people. I also don't have any problem with one who does have concerns for both. However, I don't understand how one could reasonably have any more concern over one than the other. (Unless it was for self-interest as noted above, or a personal interest with those involved, which for the rest of this letter will be assumed not to be the case). The problem I have with that is the inconsistency of it. To be concerned for humans (or anything for that matter) is to want no suffering to be done to them. To object to the suffering is to imply it is not called for. What difference does it make whether or not the recipient of the suffering is a man or a dog? How could one possibly justify more concern for a

person than an animal? Now, one might reply simply "because that's the way it is. Period." (However, I suspect it is an ideologically induced superior attitude of humans over animals. Actually, I think it is simply lack of thought, which is another way of saying being ideological!) Now, I may not object to that necessarily; however, I'm sure those people would condemn the hell out of me if I had a similar bias toward men over women or whites over blacks, etc. That would be an inconsistency, a contradiction, and I do have a serious problem with that. If along with an inconsistency, a contradiction, etc. comes suffering then I have an even more serious problem.

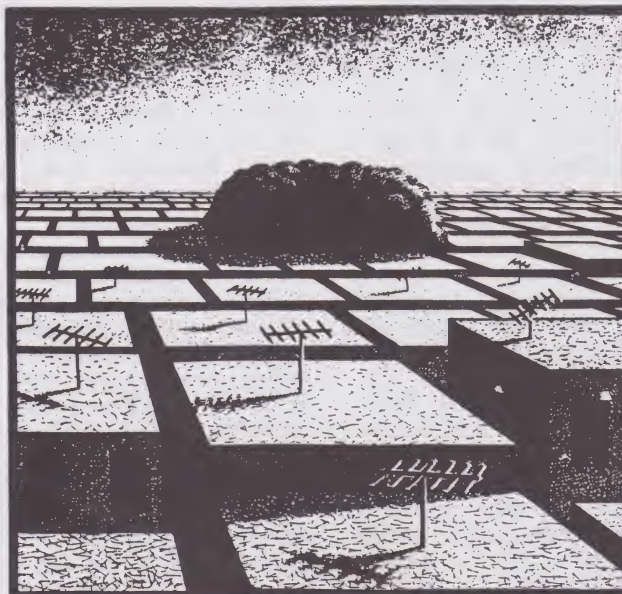
How would R. Curtis feel if I went out and found a bunch of hungry dogs, and decided to go hunt down some people to feed them with? Do you think my analogy is silly? If so, is it because of my concern for dogs? That attitude was discussed above. Is it because of the suffering caused to the people being used for food? What about the obvious and despicable suffering to the animals on your typical big farm? Or would you say the dogs could be fed something else? Well, similarly, a

person could have been fed more than adequately on non-animal-based foods.

So that you don't misinterpret, I'm not saying humans and animals are to be seen as "equals," or that they "should" be treated equally, but rather "should" be treated with equal consideration. The only thing that's necessary to consider is the only thing that matters to anything, and that is, how much it suffers. If for some reason I had to choose between keeping a dog or a man in a cage (and I had no personal bias toward either) the reasonable thing to do would be to keep the dog there, but only because it seems to me that the dog would incur less suffering than the man would. By the way, when I say "should" I mean to be consistent with one's own criteria in these matters. And, at the risk of repeating myself, if you kept the dog there solely because you would prefer it that way, then fine. But don't preach to me if I kept the man there for the simple reason that that's the way I'd prefer it.

Getting back to R. Curtis's review of *Food Not Bombs*, let me say if I saw someone very hungry, man or beast, and someone had donated some animal-derived food for the purpose of feeding the hungry then I would of course feed them with that. However, I would try to discourage the donation of those items if only because it might make the donor go out and replace those items, and in doing so, would financially support those horrible things called farms, and cause continued suffering. It is not the egg eating but rather the suffering caused as a result of it that I object to. Certainly, I would never object to someone eating road kill. Hell, for that matter, one could have ME for dinner after I'm dead. Surely, when one considers the cost of animal-foods, the suffering caused to obtain it, and even the fact that other foods seem to be at least, and most likely even more, nutritious, it does not seem unreasonable to only want to give hungry people non-animal foods.

The Park



Andrew Singer

Even you say you are uncompromisingly anti-authoritarian. I would assume the underlying reason is because it is not in our best interests. After all, if authoritarianism led to contentedness for all, then why be against it? The point is, it's not authority you're against, it's the suffering, discontent, etc. that results from it. Would it be fair to call your attitude toward authority ideological? Don't be so quick to accuse one of being ideological.

The only thing that is worthy of objection are inconsistencies and contradictions. And if suffering comes with that, it should never be tolerated.

Stephen Yankovich
Warminster, PA

Anarchism isn't pacifist

Dear Anarchy people,

I greatly appreciated the piece by "The Nechayevist Front in the last issue of *AJODA*; it was one of the few intelligent reactions to the FC question that I've seen.

It is understandable that many people in the anarchist milieu would question the Unabomber's method of action and choice of tactics, all the more so because the great majority seem opposed to violence, or at least if not totally opposed to violence, then opposed to anything but collectively engaged violence such as mass insurrection; the individual's decision to engage in such acts without the expressed permission of an organized body is a horror to many. Even the individual's choice of words may be called into question as the anarchist is trapped by the bourgeois media's games of attributing a single ideology to the anarchist movement; there are individuals and organizations that then try to redefine the ideology in their own image, convinced that if there are no monolithic positions, then the movement itself is impotent. So it is all the more reprehensible that so many have responded to FC by attempting to define anarchism as a pacifist movement; I don't recall ever getting any question-

naire on my point of view on the subject. It's rather authoritarian to negate other views. And what message does this negation send?

Without denying people the right to their opinions, at this point an honest examination of the tactics of fawning to conservatives is long overdue. (By conservatives I mean all people would conserve a system of wage labour, political representation, policing and other anti-immediatist forces.) So many (of these liberal) anarchists don't want to alienate the media (one of the most alienating and most disgusting of all institutions of power) because they seem to believe that if they could just get their message of peace and utopia out to the masses, people would understand the high moral desirability of anarchism and only at that point, when people can consciously consent to making changes in society, can we embark on mass social change without violence and bloodshed. As a person who formerly held these opinions, I can understand where this point of view is coming from and the need to separate oneself, morally, from the agents of terror and policing who rule the earth. The imperative to act morally, however, has always been part of the arsenal of the ruling classes (who generally define morality to begin with). Better to get rid of them by taking the necessary action than to live with them forever. Furthermore, in many people the decision to act morally, or, in this situation, to publicly espouse some type of morality, has more to do with a need to be recognized by others as a paragon of virtue than to affect any real change via examples of human behaviour. This strategy of appealing to conservative elements of society cannot be very effective and is likely to be less effective in the future for the following reasons:

1. technology has the capability to affect human behaviour and alter the way we socialize with remarkable speed; the technological program can outpace and will always be two steps

ahead of the anarchist moral program;

2. such moralistic issues such as equality can be easily recuperated by the ruling classes whose ability to muster public support is far greater than ours because they are intentionally deceptive;

3. people can be morally opposed to a regime but feel powerless to overthrow it, which gives any given regime a free hand to implement unpopular policies and practices which effectively negate the desire of the people;

4. the fact that anarchists don't make rebellions more often actually work to their disadvantage; when people have to look back into history to see the last rebellions, it makes anarchism look like a thing of the past. Despite what the pacifists feel, many people respect action more than perfectionism. By appealing to some of the more conservative elements, they may be discouraging some of the more radical ones.

Another thing that the moralists seem to ignore is that mass segments of society are dying to see some action, some real radical change. Go stand on a street in many NY neighbours with a sign that says "Kill the Police" and you'll get a much warmer response than standing out there with a sign that says "No More Killing-Form a Commune." These liberal anarchists, who mostly are educated white folk, would think that the second sign represents a far more productive alternative for people and it's just that the people don't understand it yet because they haven't been educated with the proper ideas. But perhaps it is the over-education of these types that alienate them from the overwhelming misery of most people on the earth. Life can be full of interesting potential for the anarcho-liberal; what a nasty interruption a social revolution could be. Many people however are more convinced that they could do with some revolution right now and are not that concerned with anarcho-details like who is going to clean the toilets; these people are far more ready

to rock and roll than the average anarchist and for obvious reasons. They have no interest in the system at all; the anarcho-liberal is more at home in it and can be more effective at coping with its standards.

I thereby agree wholeheartedly with the opinions expressed in the aforementioned tract, with one small exception. While I agree that the problems of modern society are too big to be assigned to one living symbol, this is a more effective way for one living individual to attack the minions of authority than say, blowing up the pentagon which would undoubtedly require Herculean effort of an organized nature and would be a thousand times more likely to lead to capture. Attacks on the right individuals can be highly resonant; such acts can create terror in the ranks of authority. It is important to frighten people, if only to make them understand that they cannot act with impunity.

The problem with terror campaigns, as anybody can understand, is the high probability that they can cause a public reaction, that, out of fear, people would rally to defend people and institutions that they normally could care less about or even dislike. On the other hand, each successful act of resistance (be it terror campaign or pacifist protest) sends the message out to others that they can take action. My bet is that there are thousands of individuals out there ready to pick up a gun, a monkey wrench or a wooden shoe; they may just be waiting for others to start up the action. (Anybody who has ever been in a semi-riot has probably seen crowds of people waiting eagerly to shoplift-waiting for the first person to smash a store window.) The anarcho-evolutionists might argue that periods of social unrest simply lead to ones of reaction, but remember how much fun we all have recalling the unrest.

Fuck capitalism, fuck civilization!

An unrepentant revolutionist.
Laure Akai
Moscow, Russia



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